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DISTRIBUTED BY FOX RACING EUROPE
WWW.FOXEUROPE.COM OR CALL (0191) 487 6100

PODMX.COM
RRP £499.95 PAIR

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August

2006

DIRTBIKE
RIDER





COMMENT

'TOO FAST', 'track's not technical enough', 'didn't have the atmosphere of a British GP'... You're never going to please all of the people all of the time and these negative comments were the three main criticisms that were being banded about at Matterley Basin.

The fact is all three criticisms ring true (with me at least) and they are all related. Think about it. The track wasn't all that technical which made it too fast. This made the racing a bit of a freight train which is never going to make for lots of passing. And that does the atmosphere no favours at all.

Another possible reason why the GP was generally lacking in atmosphere was the way the sheer size of the place meant the crowd were inevitably spread out. I've never been able to look at a crowd and come up with an accurate estimate of its size but I'd be surprised if the official figures (40,000 over the weekend was one we heard) weren't a little, er, enthusiastic!

Anyway, all the above is as negative as I'm going to get this month. The truth is I remember too clearly our time in the grand prix wilderness and we've all got to be positive about hosting world championship rounds in Britain.

So, on that note...

Positive #1! In defence of chief digger driver Johnny Douglas-Hamilton and his track-building team, they didn't have the luxury of weeks to get the circuit dialled in – the whole thing was put together in record time. Add to that the fact they didn't have another important luxury – a shakedown meeting before the GP to fine tune the track – and all things considered JDH and the gang did a sterling job.

Positive #2! Come September 23/24 and the Motocross des Nations, the empty spaces that didn't lend themselves to a good atmosphere won't be empty anymore. Can you imagine what a buzz 30,000-plus people packed into Matterley Basin will generate?

Positive #3! With almost three months to work on the track (and let's not forget the recent news that they no longer have to tear down the jumps between now and the MXdN) can you imagine how much more improved it will be after Johnny's gone to town on it?

Positive #4! The Bike It promotions team behind the GP and this year's MXdN are committed to learning lessons from the inaugural event at the venue.

"The MXGP has been a big success without doubt," says Bike It boss Martin Mainsbridge, "but that isn't to say that we have not learnt valuable lessons from running our first event at this brand new venue."

"The great news is that it is all systems go for the MX of Nations which will be bigger and better in every aspect and will benefit incredibly from what has been identified over the last week. While the basic layout of the track will remain unchanged it will be added to to make it both more technical and more spectacular."

"This time it was about delivering the basics and with them now in place we can work on increasing the entertainment away from the track and giving everyone even better value for money in September."

So there you have it – the biggest event on the MX calendar is coming to Matterley Basin and it's going to be a cracker!

Sean

PS If you're reading this Nelly from Merthyr Tydfil, great to meet you on Saturday night mate – and a great big cheers from Bingo and the DBR drunkards for your hic-hic-hospitality!

Josh Coppins is heading to Yamaha in '07



© Alex Hodgkinson

COPPINS QUILTS CAS!

British MX1 champ takes Everts' place on Rinaldi Yamaha team

REIGNING BRITISH MX1 champion and world #2 Josh Coppins will fill the berth on the Rinaldi Yamaha team left vacant by the retirement of Stefan Everts at the end of the '06 season.

For Josh, who's ridden for the British CAS Honda team since 2003, the lure of a lucrative two-year deal and the chance to join a world-championship winning team proved an irresistible combination.

"Since I came to Europe 11 years ago I have always been very impressed with the Rinaldi Yamaha team," explains the 29-year-old Kiwi who will be joined by Dutchman Marc De Reuver on the official Yamaha factory team. "They have been right up there for more than 15 years and since 2001 they have proven to be pretty much unbeatable. Especially this year their new bike is winning almost everything."

"So what more can I ask for? Being able to ride with them next year will give me the best opportunity ever to win the world title I've been chasing for so long."

CAS Honda team owner Harry Ainsworth

understands his star rider's decision to defect.

"I respect the decision Josh has made to go to Yamaha," he says in an open letter. "In March of this year Josh and I were talking and I said to him the only team that he could go to was Rinaldi."

"To match the Yamaha offer we would have put too much financial pressure on the team. The team and the people within are as important to us as the rider and we would not want to risk damaging anything we have worked so hard to achieve together."

A separate press release from CAS Honda reveals that Belgian Ken De Dycker has signed up again for 2007 and hints at a replacement for Coppins. "We have also been in negotiation for the last two weeks with a proven GP winner," it teases, "and these discussions are nearly complete."

So the big question is who? As DBR was winging its way to press the word on the street is that the 'proven GP winner' could very well be Billy MacKenzie, Alex Hodgkinson, Roger Harvey, Redeye, Sid Little, Dear Jonny Bentman, Adam Wheeler

"It's not definite," says Billy. "They've shown interest but I think they've shown interest in a few people. At the moment there's nothing really to say."

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DOBBER RECKONS

FORMER WORLD 125cc champ Jamie Dobb was an interested – and at times animated – spectator at the British GP as he watched his protégé Tommy Searle race to a maiden podium finish.

When it comes to motocross Dobber's been around the block a few times so his opinion on the circuit should be of interest to everyone.

"The track was okay to say it's never been raced," reckons the '01 world champ. "They can hopefully learn from this now and make a few changes and make it a little bit better."

"I think it formed good racing – there was passing went on and, yeah, there needs to be little things altered but I think the main thing is water. They couldn't get the water down beforehand. It was fast but some tracks are slow, some tracks are fast – it's the world championship, we don't want them all the same."

"The weird thing is people say it's not technical but the depth in time is one of the biggest we've had all year so I don't know how they can say that. I think it will be good for the des Nations."

MASTERS MOVED!

THERE'S A bit of bad news for the registered riders of the Wulfsport British Masters series, especially the ones who were looking forward to getting down and dirty at Gore Basin on the Isle of Wight.

It seems the correct planning permission for the circuit has not been applied for by the land owner. With that in mind the Parish Council have warned the AMCA that they'll exercise 'enforcement powers' if the meeting goes ahead as planned.

As an alternative to the Arretton event, Ken Winstanley and the British Masters crew have decided to head to Pontrilas in Herefordshire for the fifth and final round of their championship. For more details as well as results and pictures from the Foxhill – or Wulfmountain as it's now known – round check out www.britishmastersmx.com

DAWN TO DUSK

ENTRIES ARE now open for what's quite possibly the most stupid, masochistic event in the British off-road calendar.

The Dawn to Dusk 12-hour enduro takes place this year over the weekend of August 26/27 (yep, it's a Bank Holiday) at Glynneath in South Wales.

Open to enduro and motocross bikes, the event contains no roadwork and features an 18-mile lap packed with just about every type of terrain Mother Nature can throw at you – we're talking climbs, descents, river-crossings, bogs, trees and flat-out blasts.

Experts will be able to take advantage of some super-tough shortcuts while less talented riders can opt for challenging but easier alternative routes. There will be trophies and prize money of £500 to the overall winners, medals for all finishers and souvenir t-shirts for all entrants.

To help with the fun family atmosphere there will be a free weekend on-site camping area including huge beer tent with disco, a video screen showing last year's highlights, hog roast, quality food vendors and trade stands – including bike manufacturers.

And just to add to the fun there will be an enduro for the nippers on the Saturday before the main action kicks off the following morning.

For entries and more information go to www.dawntodusk.co.uk

MASTERCCLASS!

TRIALS LEGEND Dougie Lampkin has released dates of his summer trials schools – but don't hang about as for the last seven years his feet-up masterclasses have been total sell-outs.

Dougie will be joined by his WTC team plus international guest instructors to offer what is without a doubt the finest trials tuition going.

The schools take place from August 7-11 at a venue near Silsden in the heart of Lampkin country. A maximum of 20 riders will be accepted each day who will be split into groups according to ability before receiving personal instruction from Dougie and his team.

Each student will work through a structured programme during a minimum of four hours on-the-bike training. On top of this advice will also be given concerning bike maintenance, competition strategy and physical training with each day rounded off with a demo by Dougie.

Each day will be a separate school, although pupils have the option of booking the following day if they wish to return to learn more advanced skills (strictly limited to a maximum of two days per rider).

Price is £149.95 per rider per day which includes insurance and a souvenir award. For bookings and further information write to G2F at 7 All Saints, Orrell Street, Bury BL8 1PF, call them on 0161 763 6660 or fire off an electronic letter to <mailto:info@g2f.co.uk>



Dougie proved that you can teach an old Dawg new tricks!

WIN! WIN! WIN!

Personalised Team Pioneer Race Kit

THANKS TO our best buddy Phillip at No Fear (www.nofearmx.com) and his best buddy Neil at Concept 21 (www.concept21design.com) we're able to offer you the chance to win a full set – that's shirt, pants and gloves – of personalised Team Pioneer Yamaha No Fear race kit as worn by members of Team Pioneer Yamaha.

All you have to do to win is tell us which Welshman is Pioneer Yamaha's main man in the Maxxis MX1 British championship?

Is it:

- A) Brad Anderson
- B) Glen Phillips
- C) Mike Foster
- D) Terrance and Phillip
- E) Glen Dempsey

As soon as you know the answer write it down on the back of a postcard, sealed down envelope or a used pie dish and send it – along with your name, address, the size of riding kit you require and a daytime telephone number – to 'Nuevos No Fear Compos', DBR, 12 Victoria Street, Morecambe, Lancs, LA4 4AG.

The first correct answer drawn at random from a giant correct-answers-only flavoured Pukkapie will win the personalised kit.

Closing date is August 11.



Printed in England by
PCR, Telford

Circulation
Seymour, 86 Newman Street,
London W1T 9EX

Published MONTHLY by



Subscriptions

1 Year: UK £30
Europe £49.50
Rest of the world £65

All applications to:
DBR Subscription Department,
12 Victoria Street
Morecambe, Lancashire LA4 4AG
Tel: 01524 834030
Fax: 01524 425469

Postmaster send address
corrections to: Dirt Bike Rider, PO
Box 100, Avenel New Jersey 07001.
Periodicals Postage paid at
Rahway, NJ.
ISSN 01 0262 5628.

Copies of dbr can be obtained
each month by placing a Standing
Order with your newsagent.
In case of difficulty, contact our
Circulation Manager.

Readers in USA and Canada
may call Eastern News toll-free
on 800-221-3148 to locate your
nearest stockist.

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**Cover: RWJ Honda's
James Noble tears
up the track at
Desertmartin
(Sutty)**

**Contents main image:
Birthday boy Steven
Clarke makes his GP
debut at Matterley
(Sutty)**



HODGE LIVES!

WE'VE ALL heard the warnings about the danger of thrombosis from air travel and we all take it with a pinch of salt. But six days after getting back from the Japanese GP our continental correspondent Alex Hodgkinson was afflicted – he just didn't realise what it was.

"The weather's been so miserable and damp at home and it seemed to be in the joints so I brushed it off as a touch of arthritis," reckons German-based Hodge. "Take a hot bath advised the wife' and it worked – I was out jogging in the afternoon!"

But 24 hours later the clot had moved to his heart and a lung and Hodge was on a drip and oxygen mask in intensive care.

Ignoring Herr Doktor's orders to stay in hospital for 10 days, Hodge signed himself out and boarded a plane for the Bulgarian GP armed with enough needles, pills and potions to open a branch of Boots.

A week later he made the 15-hour drive to Italy and to complete the round trip headed to Matterley Basin the weekend after where we found him enjoying rude health. "Just say tales of my death are somewhat premature," he grinned!



Tiff – delightful!



Hodge was executed for crimes against shorts

STAR SIGNING!

Pastrana to race Red Bull Romaniacs

TRAVIS PASTRANA is the latest big name to sign up for the Red Bull Romaniacs, billed as the world's hardest enduro.

The American MX, SX and FMX ace joins fellow freestyle stars Ronnie Renner, Jimmy Verburgh and Andy Bell in a starting line-up that already boasts British motocross legend Kurt Nicoll as well as Giovanni Sala and Cyril Depres.

Pastrana's facing six days of pure hell in Romania's Carpathian mountains thanks to film-maker Gregg Godfrey, the man behind the hugely popular Nitro Circus series. "I think I'm going to break my leg so Godfrey doesn't drag me over to torture myself in another hard enduro," jokes Travis.

Godfrey had his introduction to the Romaniacs last year and decided to come back for second helpings – and he clearly figures that if he was going to suffer so should his friends.

"I was blown away," he admits. "Never in my life have I done a tougher event – I had to get some of the Nitro Circus crew and do it again this year. This is going to be a killer time."

There are still a few spaces on the startline for the event running from August 13-19. For more details check out www.redbullromaniacs.com



ONE-11 HEAVEN!

NEVER ONES to turn down the offer of free food and beer or to pass up on the chance of an evening in the delightful company of the delightful Tiff, we recently found ourselves quaffing and scoffing at an open evening to launch the new Altringham premises of One-11 MX.

The plush new HQ on the Stag Industrial Estate is a whopping 5000 square feet, 3000 of which is taken up by a rather lovely showroom.

"We opened a new website last year and a KTM dealership and it went through the ceiling and we needed premises that could accept a few people and cater with all our mail order," explains One-11 MX big cheese Pete Jolly.

"We never had a workshop before either and it was just the right time to move. It's just been a natural progression with the way the business has gone."

WIN! WIN! WIN!

Crock Star clobber plus VIP treatment at the GP of Ireland up for grabs

HE'S THE fastest MXer ever to come out of Ireland and to celebrate the return to form of Gordon Crockard – and the return for the third year running of the Grand Prix of Northern Ireland – one lucky reader is going to win a bunch of Crock Star swag plus VIP treatment at the GP courtesy of those fine folk at the Northern Ireland Events Company.

We've got a GC-signed Wulfsport shirt and paddock jacket up for grabs plus two VIP passes to the GP on August 26/27 AND accommodation for two people (sharing) at the Derrynoid Centre a couple of miles from the Desertmartin track.

To be in with a chance of winning just tell us Gordy's home town.

Is it:

- A) Newtownards
- B) Newton Abbot
- C) Newton-le-Willows
- D) Chorlton-cum-Hardy

Think you know? Okay, write your answer down on the back of a postcard or sealed envelope and send it – along with your name, address and a daytime telephone number – to 'GC Gear', DBR, 12 Victoria Street, Morecambe, Lancs LA4 4AG.

The first correct answer drawn at random from a clean (if rather threadbare) pair of Gordy's Wulfsport undies gets the goodies. Closing date is August 11. Please note, the winner will have to provide his or hers own transport...



GOLDEN OLDIES!

THIS YEAR'S Namur GP – August 5/6 – will see the inaugural FIM Veteran Motocross World Cup held alongside the usual MX1 and MX2 classes.

The cup will have two age-related classes, the Senior division will be for riders between the ages of 40 and 50 while the Veteran class is for the slightly older 51 to 60-year-olds. Each class will have 40 carefully selected past masters who'll be whittled down to the fastest 30 after qualification.

Former champions will not have to ride their vintage machines and will be free to choose any capacity bike under the MX1, MX2 or MX3 rules.

GORDON CROCKARD

COMEBACK CROCK!

SEVENTH AT MATTERLEY, FOURTH IN SWEDEN, WINNER AT RHAYADER – THINGS ARE STARTING TO LOOK UP FOR GORDY...

WORDS BY GORDON CROCKARD

HI EVERYONE, what's the craic? I've been racing a lot last month. Seven events in total in June – that's almost the same amount as I've done in the last two years. Bulgaria GP, Italy GP, Rhayader evening MX, British GP, Desertmartin British championship, Tandragee evening SX and yesterday the Swedish GP.

Bulgaria was fun for me and I had good times in practice and qualifying which helped for gate position in the race. I made a top 10 start but didn't capitalise on it enough and ended up finishing 11th after suffering arm-pump 10 minutes in. The second moto was a total washout. Initially I was making some good passes after a dodgy first turn and probably was setting myself up for a decent finish but I had to throw off my goggles and really struggled after that and I even fell off. I finished 17th or something.

I was out training on my road bicycle before the Italian GP and when I left the camper the sun was splitting the skies and the temperature was high. So I got fully kitted up in the summer gear and headed off for a few hours only for a thunderstorm to break out.

When that started I was an hour-and-a-half from the camper – obviously I had no choice other than to get back ASAP as the weather looked set for the day and I was freezing and soaking wet. I was pushing hard and learned that there's not so much grip on certain wet tarmac. I crashed on a bend and was lucky not to get run over. Feeling a touch sore down one side and looking like a total idiot in my summer gear with it pouring down you can imagine what I thought of myself.

The Italian GP went pretty good. I made a hash of qualifying though which turned out to really affect my whole weekend. I went the wrong direction a little with my set up on the track so a poor time left me in gate 26 and not much chance of the holeshot. I came from almost last to 12th and the second moto was going good until I collided with Big Ken and could only recover to 20th.

I got back to the UK and went practising over at Tom's Farm in Wales. Daryl Bolter was riding there that day, getting in shape for the Welsh Two-Day Enduro which was the next week. I'd like to do that event some day as it sounds like a lot of fun and very social. Roger Harvey rode the event this year and badly broke his leg. Get well soon big man.

I raced Rhayader that night and won myself a few quid yet again. I rode my practice bike and didn't realise how much the clutch was slipping until the first race. I just managed to hold on for second place and then went on a F1 pit stop mission to get the bike sorted. Mark Jones kindly lent me a new clutch and I made it through the night and won the Dash for Cash at the end of the evening's fun.

The next day I got myself transported down to Winchester for the GP that weekend. My former bosses Steve Dixon and Martin Mansbridge were hosting the event and I knew that they would put 100 per cent effort into it. If you were there you'll have your own opinion but I thought it was very good. Any errors which were made will be put right for the MXdN in September and I'm already excited about going back there to race again.

I got ninth in qualifying and felt strong for the race again. In the first heat I was mid-pack off the start and pushed up to seventh at the finish. I fell twice in the race trying to pass guys as I was anxious to get through and get a bit of clear track in front of me. I also had the second fastest lap of the race which really gave me a positive boost for the second moto.

My start wasn't great and it got a whole lot worse when Bas Verhoeven got bogged in a dusty berm and I half ran into him and went down. This was at the end of the whoops on the first lap and the China Man (Marvin Van Daele) landed right on my back. I was wrecked! I made my way to the medic centre to get checked out – nothing broken but huge bruising and a haematoma along with quite deep tyre track cuts in my back. No more racing for me that day and not too much sleep for a few nights either I was that sore.

I raced at Desertmartin the next Saturday but struggled due to my back. I got sixth and fourth which was really frustrating at my home round. But I've still the Desertmartin GP to hopefully impress my home fans. The venue up there is amazing so don't miss the GP on August 26/27.

I coached 20 young riders at Tandragee as part of the Red Bull MX Academy and the future for Irish MX is very bright. They all showed huge heart and great talent and I was pleased to see such passion in their riding. I raced that night in the SX at Tandragee and had a second, two wins and a DNF in the Dash for Cash. I rode a 250F borrowed from Russells Motorcycles of Carryduff and loved riding the smaller engined bike. They're awesome fun.

Next day it was over to Sweden for the GP and the weather was fantastic. The last GP I won was there and it felt good to see the place again. I was 11th in qualifying, seventh in the first race and fourth in the second moto for fifth overall. I was really pleased with getting fourth as it's been a while since I've run at the front end of the pack at GP level. This also moved me high enough in the championship to receive travel assistance money from Youthstream to go to South Africa for the next round.

Thanks for reading and supporting me at the British GP. See ya trackside!

RIDE MX FACTOR UPDATE!

Photo by Joe Beattie

DREW GOUDY, winner of the ground-breaking Ride MX Factor competition earlier this year, is adapting well to his new YZ125 after moving up to the Intermediate 125cc division from the BW85cc class.

After a slowish start to the season – Drew was only able to pick up his new bike a week before the BYMX opener at Matchams – the 15-year-old's improved loads and even scored sixth overall at the last two rounds of the BYMX series at Culham and Scarborough.

With the next couple of championship races running on Drew's home soil of Northern Ireland – at Ballykelly and Desertmartin – he's hoping to further increase his points haul and move up the ranks in the championship chase.

Drew Goudy's coming on strong



FLIPPIN' GREAT!

IF THERE'S one thing you just have to do this summer it's checking out Cullingworth's first ever back-flip at The Great Yorkshire Bike Show. The show that's held at Cullingworth Showground on July 29/30 is situated just off the A629 between Bradford and Keighley.

As well as the flippin' FMXers there'll also be extreme trials demos and both the Globe and Wall of Death stunt shows, monster truck racing and 1000s – I said 1000s – of the 'sexiest' motorcycles known to man, woman, child or beast! All in all it'll be a reet good family day out!

Entrance to the event costs just £10 for adults, £5 for under 14s with nippers under five years old getting in for free – that's right I said free! For more information call the C+C Events hotline – I said hotline – on **01274 566122**.

MARGAM MASTERS!

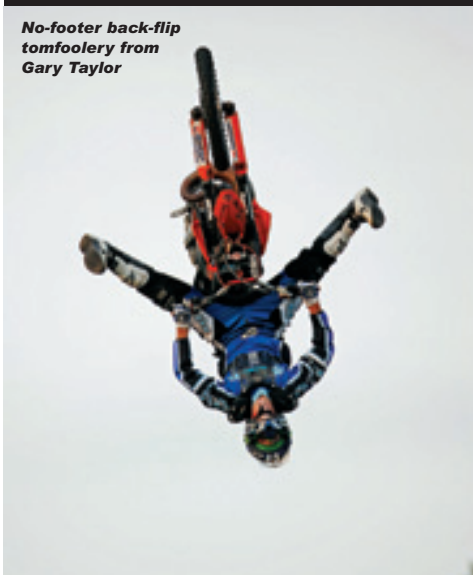
THERE'S A battle of the back-flippers at round one of the UKFMX Masters of Freestyle at Margam Park in South Wales.

With most of the UK's top riders in town – Kris Brock, Gary Taylor, Danny Veale, Disco Wiggins, John Pearson and Frazer Swanson – it boils down to an all-out air battle for supremacy between Brock and Taylor.

It's Brock who takes the win in Best Whip while Taylor turns the tables on Brock in Best Run. But in Sick Trick neither of them have anything on John Pearson who flips the 65ft ramp to take the win.

The next round of the FreestyleXtreme sponsored series takes place at Margam Park on July 19 starting at 7pm. It costs just a fiver to get in with under 15s charged just £3. For more info check out www.myspace.com/ukfmfx.

No-footer back-flip tomfoolery from Gary Taylor



COACH PARTY!

BELIEVE IT or not this photo wasn't actually taken at the All-English Blinking Championships. No, this motley crew of eye-closed 'eroes are actually the ACU's latest crack team of National Assessors.

The team of highly-trained and respected coaches which includes the likes of James Lampkin, Ed Bradley, Vic Allen, Ady Smith, Geraint Jones and Paul Cowshall will provide training and assessment for all future ACU coaches.

"Today heralds the start of a bright new future for motorcycle sport coaching," reckons ACU training manager Dave Luscombe. "With champions the calibre of Smith, Lampkin and Jones at our disposal anyone wishing to become a motorcycle sport coach is assured of some serious support and training to get them started."

"I am convinced that this new level of support will do much to assist young British riders to compete successfully at the highest level."

For more information on the ACU coaching scheme and how to get involved call the ACU on **01788 566400** or fire off an email to dw@acu.org.uk

Results

Best Run

- 1 Gary Taylor (KTM)
- 2 Kris Brock (Honda)
- 3 Dave Wiggins (Honda)

Best Whip

- 1 Kris Brock (Honda)
- 2 Gary Taylor (KTM)
- 3 Danny Veale (Suzuki)

Sick Trick

- 1 John Pearson (Suzuki)
- 2 Gary Taylor (KTM)
- 3 Kris Brock (Honda)



WHERE'S SUTTY?

OUR DASHING deputy editor was flat-out all GP weekend pushing his new product – SuttDawg Energy drink. But no matter how hard he tried he couldn't convince any of the oh-so lovely – and very hard working – Bike-It/Dixon promo girls to 'taste the Dawg'.

WIN! WIN! WIN!

Science In Sport Nutrition packs

SCIENCE IN Sport are considered to be the industry leader when it comes to providing quality nutritional products for top athletes. And seeing as we've already tried and tested the full range – and very nice it is too – we've decided to hook up with SIS and offer you the chance to win one of three £90 SIS prize packs!

Each pack includes a 1.6kg container of GO Electrolyte drink mix, a 1.6kg container of REGO Recovery drinks mix, two drinks bottles and a box full of GO Bars. For more info on the full SIS range check out www.scienceinsport.com.

Anyhoo, all you've got to do to win one of the prize packs of sports nutrition goodies is identify which SIS sponsored athlete is rehydrating himself in the picture below?

Is it:

- A) Tom Church
- B) Tom Cruise
- C) Tom Delonge
- D) Tom Thumb
- E) Tommy Searle

When you think you know the answer write it down on the back of a postcard or a sealed down envelope and send it – along with your name, address and daytime telephone number – to 'Send me SIS', DBR, 12 Victoria Street, Morecambe, Lancs LA4 4AG. Entries close on August 11 with the first three randomly drawn correct entries grabbing the goodies.



WOR BLIMEY!

ROUND FOUR of the hugely successful WOR GBHS series takes place on July 22/23 at Pen Y Bont Fawr, Powys.

With classes for all ages and abilities, the hare scrambles championship genuinely does offer something for everyone.

The eight-mile Pen Y Bont Fawr circuit is described by WOR boss Steve Ireland as the "fast open one" with the course taking in rolling hills, fast farm tracks, big hill climbs and, of course, bottomless bogs.

Entries close a week before the event so if you want to race you better get booked in pretty sharpish! For more details and regs go to www.worevents.com or email WOR at gbhs@worevents.com



FEELING DRAINED!

AS IF ANOTHER INFECTION ISN'T BAD ENOUGH, SWORDY'S BEEN HOOKED UP TO THE NATIONAL GRID FOR THE LAST FOUR WEEKS

WORDS BY STEPHEN SWORD PHOTO BY SUTTY

IF YOU read last month's column you were probably aware that my ankle was getting better and at the time of writing it was – but then things took a turn for the worse. The infection in my leg didn't clear up properly which resulted in another trip to hospital where I was kept in for eight days. In that time I underwent a small operation to clean the wound and was stuck on a high dosage of antibiotics.

Because part of the wound was left open they put a drain in my leg which helps to suck out the infection and speed up the healing process. The drain was in for almost four weeks and while it wasn't painful it was uncomfortable and severely restricted what I could do because it had to be plugged into the mains. The good news is I went to the hospital this morning to get my dressing changed and they decided to remove the drain which I'm over the moon about – it means I can pop down the pub on Saturday for a shandy!

Next week I will start physio and get myself down to the gym and not before time as all my muscles have shrunk and I've lost over one-and-a-half stone since the crash. I'm really looking forward to starting training again – even though it's going to be light training to start off with – and just getting out of the house and living a semi-normal life again is a good feeling. I'm not a very patient person and there is only so much TV anyone can take but it's been good that the World

Cup's been on and that Wimbledon's started.

I was disappointed not to be able to get to the British GP to catch up with everyone although I did watch it on TV and thought it came across good. I heard that a few people were complaining about the track but it looked fine from where I was sitting. On their way to the GP my team and a few other mechanics popped in to see me, Jan (the boss) and Ellen called in also on the Friday to say hi – it's good to know they are supporting me. I talk to Jan and Luka two or three times a week just to let them know how I'm getting on and they fill me in on all the news from the races.

I'm missing the time at the races, when I watch them on TV I try to picture myself there and imagine where I would be in the race. I've been studying all the riders, especially Everts – he's so calculated and is in control of the race all the time.

When you're racing everything revolves around training, riding and travelling so when you have an injury that puts you out for a while it's a shock to the system for a month or so. But now I've got my head around the situation (and got rid of the drain) I'm going to go and enjoy some of the things that I wouldn't normally do when I'm in the middle of a full season.

Well that's about all for this month – all that remains is to send out my love and thoughts to the Lyons family who have lost a real gentleman.

Take care and see you all soon...





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CARNAGE!

What will it take for track builders to realise that right-hand first turns suck ass? We've witnessed first turn carnage at both the Landrake and Desertmartin rounds of the Maxxis British championship as riders head into turn one with their right legs outstretched meaning their rear brakes are unusable. Here MX1 runners Steve Heighton (#109), Aaron Poolman (#79) and Craig Trew (#53) ruin their day at Desertmartin to prove our point...





NEXT MONTH



TOMMY SEARLE

The 17-year-old sensation with the world at his feet



GPGGB

Can Dougie do the business on home soil at Hawkstone?



DAVID PHILIPPAERTS

Champ KTM's Italian hotshot eyes up the MX2 crown

Plus... World motocross, trials and enduro wraps, 'forgotten' champ Sven Breugelmans, all the usual columns and a bunch of other stuff we haven't thought of yet...

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BLARNEY

WORDS BY STEVIE MILLS PHOTO BY SUTTY

PARCHED DESERT!

IT TAKES A LITTLE MORE THAN JUST GREAT RACING TO MAKE A GREAT EVENT – SO WHERE WERE THE CROWD AT DESERTMARTIN?

A **SOMEWHAT** diluted crowd attended what was a great day's racing at the recent round of the British championship at Desertmartin. The Cookstown and District Motorcycle Club prepared and ran the event as they always do with the professionalism that we have come to expect from this dedicated crew.

I fear that the £20 admission (not including a programme) contributed to the lack of spectators. I also believe that had the admission been half of what it was it could have attracted triple the gate. No accountancy degree needed here – just simple maths! Another disappointing and contributing factor was that a major road race was run on the same day not 20 miles from Desertmartin!

Considering that both are sanctioned by the MCUI is it the case that the left hand did not know what the right hand was planning or is it more to do with not caring? National road and motocross events share the same dates regularly but running one event nearly within sight of the other beggars belief.

Those that were at Desertmartin witnessed the extreme talent of Tommy Searle. Sure, the Kawasaki ace didn't win on the day – but what a talent for the future. I would probably go as far as to say that never in the history of history has such a young rider from the UK shown such promise – a world champion in the making maybe? But the draw of the bright lights and mega-bucks that beckon from the USA could well spoil that dream.

The MX1 class was a CAS Honda showcase. GC struggled with a near life-sized tattoo of Russia – or, as the medical world calls it, a haematoma (which to the average bear means a bloody big bruise). As you can imagine this injury restricted his movement and indeed results at Desertmartin.

Martin Barr had his fair share of bad luck as he was penalised in the second moto due to exhaust problems which put the Dixon Yamaha over the permitted noise limit.

The GOMX/Russell's squad had a mixed day. British championship regular Robert Hamilton fell while running eighth but team-mate Mike Sinton scored points in the first moto. And 16-year-old Luke Wilde qualified for his first ever British champs and finished 24th – he was delighted to be on the same track as the GP and British regulars.

Tommy Merton rode through the pack to take his first point on his Rainey Brothers Racing Honda. In the MX2 class both Wayne Garrett on the Moto-One/Intouch KTM and Brian McKeown provided plenty for the home crowd to cheer about. We have always known Wayne has a turn of speed but his ability to run with the top five British championship racers will have given optimism for a full season in the near future. The Comber lad suffered from arm-pump and faded towards the end of the first moto although he more than made up for it second time out, finishing in a creditable 11th. Brian McKeown was impressive – he ran top 10 in the first moto until fatigue set in and he finished 16th in the second moto.

Round two of the MCCNI-run Polisport SX series provided some close mid-week action at Tandragee Moto Park. Series leader Martin Barr crashed out of contention in the second heat and his machine was unable to perform its duties for the remainder of the night.

The racing between McCullough, Crookard and Dash for Cash winner Wayne Garrett was nothing less than spectacular with LS Racing rider and Wayne's younger brother Jason Garrett mixing it with the established stars.

A full line-up of schoolies enjoyed being part of the programme and some 20 youth 85cc riders attended the Red Bull Assist Programme with Gordon before the main event. A welcome visitor was Khris Meeke who swapped his WRC car for a ride on a Monster mini for the evening in the celebrity minibike races. Khris looked at home on two wheels and proved as competitive as ever.

All of a sudden the Grand Prix of Ireland – August 26/27 at Desertmartin – is looking like it could be the most exciting Irish GP to date. And why is this you may ask? Well if Gordon keeps on finding

pieces of the jigsaw that he's been steadily building throughout the season we could possibly witness a fit and on-form display from the Wulfsport rider.

The BYMX will run not one but two national championship rounds in Northern Ireland with the first being at Ballykelly on July 21/22 with the Desertmartin venue hosting a round one week later. Good luck to all our local heroes. Unfortunately, young Simon Reid from Dromore will not get to show just what he can do on home soil but there is always next year. So it will be up to Luke Wilde, Drew Goudy, Nat Kane, Ed Allingham and the Irwin boys to keep the home flag flying at Ballykelly.

Finally this month, congratulations to the North Dublin Club on making improvements to their Gormanstown circuit where round four of the Irish MX1/MX2 series was held. At the halfway point Philip McCullough leads from team-mate Garrett with Mike Sinton in third spot.

WAYNE GARRETT IMPRESSED
MANY PEOPLE WITH HIS
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JONTY'S BOX

WORDS AND PHOTO BY JONTY EDMUNDS

NO BRAINER!

WHY SHOULD A TOP RIDER EFFECTIVELY PAY TO RACE FOR HIS COUNTRY AT THE ISDE WHEN HE COULD BE EARNING MEGA MONEY IN THE STATES? THE ANSWER IS, QUITE SIMPLY, HE SHOULDN'T...

FOR ANYONE not closely involved in the British and world enduro scene David Knight's decision not to compete in this year's ISDE in New Zealand might well have come as a bit of a shock. He is after all the world's best enduro rider at present, the defending ISDE event winner and the rider that has played a pivotal role in helping GB place fourth in '02, fifth in '04 and fourth again in '05 in the Trophy Team event. He's also, with the exception of Paul Edmondson, Britain's only full-time professional enduro rider and a man who has spent more of his own money representing his country than most. And that is where the problems lie.

Enduro, as everyone knows, isn't a lucrative sport where the best in the world earn super-sized salaries and have everything handed to them on a plate. Far from it. It's a sport where working hard and taking risks is what's needed to succeed and earning a living from full-time racing is something only a select few are good enough and fortunate enough to do. David has worked extremely hard to earn his living racing an enduro bike and is now starting to reap the rewards of what he has sewn over the last five years.

The ISDE itself is a strange event and one that offers little reward to professional riders, unlike the select few extreme and indoor events that now take place around the world. With Joe Public able to compete in the ISDE alongside the world's best the six days is an event that's steeped in history (it celebrates its 81st birthday in November) while at the same time one that's no longer as important as it once was. The FIM still think it is but to professional riders it's not. In reality it's time for an Enduro des Nations but that's a whole different subject.

The event that once helped manufacturers sell bikes around the world providing they triumphed in or simply finished 'the Olympics of motorcycling' no longer carries the marketing kudos it did. Today manufacturers are focused on making money from the event by renting bikes to willing and often not-that-able riders. As far as Europe's leading bike builders are concerned topping the ISDE is great but winning world titles is what they are really focused on. As the FIM themselves admit the ISDE is now a celebration of off-road motorcycling.

David's reasons for not competing are simple. As any rider that has ever competed in the six days will tell you the event consumes large amounts of time, effort and money in much the same way as the Dakar does but only a smaller scale – no matter whether you are an

enthusiastic amateur or, as David is, a professional.

Competing for your country shouldn't cost a rider anything but in reality no matter how much money is raised or given by the ACU it does. Putting a hand in his own pocket to cover bits n' bobs is something David, like all British team riders, has had to do time and time again. In David's case on five separate occasions – each and every time he has raced for the British Trophy team as well as in '03 when he got himself and his machinery ready only to be told at the 11th hour that the ACU were no longer sending a Trophy team. He has never bitched and moaned about it, he did it to ensure that he was as well prepared as he could be – not only for himself but for the British Trophy team as well.

But two things changed for David last year, both of which made him stop and think twice about competing in future ISDE events. He achieved one of his goals as a professional motorcycle rider by winning the '05 running of the event and later went on to win both the Las Vegas Endurocross and the Red Bull Last Man standing events in the States. For winning the ISDE he got numerous pats on the back, several magazine covers across Europe and a raised international profile. For winning two one-day events in the US he got all of the above as well as earning \$20,000.

So it's not really that difficult to see, bearing in mind that this year's ISDE clashes with the Vegas Endurocross, why David has opted not to compete in New Zealand. With the event coming at the end of a demanding season that has seen David rest far less than any professional athlete should, having to spend his own money to compete in an event that he has now won outright and will see little financial reward from doesn't have the same appeal as it did in years past.

Add to that the fact that at the same time he stands a very real chance of earning what for an enduro rider is a considerable sum of money by competing in two all-expenses-paid events in the US, a clearer picture develops as to why the world's best enduro rider has decided not to represent his country. As a professional motorcycle rider David has a finite amount of time at the top of his game. During that time he has to try and win as many races as he can and earn as much money as he can, all the while still enjoying what he does.

David will be back competing in the six days – of that I'm sure – but for the time being specialist one-off events in the States have the edge over the ISDE.

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All letters/emails must be accompanied by a full address. Oh, and please don't send emails all in capitals. Cheers!

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It's the kinda deal known in the trade as a double bonus! Write to Rant, get your letter published and you'll win a one-litre trigger bottle of marvellous bike cleaning fluid Muc-Off. And if we rate your letter highly enough you'll also receive our monthly star prize – a pair of Ikon VX1 Pro boots in your chosen size and colour...



HOT WEEKEND!

It's the Tuesday after the British GP and I still feel tired! What a great weekend it was – no queues to get in or out, great weather, awesome track and most importantly great racing! I've never been to a track where you could literally see the whole circuit from anywhere you chose to view from.

My girlfriend Beccy is reasonably new to motocross but she loved it (although she did keep asking "when's the final thingy on?" – I think she's been watching too much supercross). However, I did notice that she seemed to be loving Billy Mac a bit too much!

The entertainment on Saturday night was spot on – especially the nice wholesome looking girls on the stage. It was also nice to see that it wasn't just me and Beccy who had caned a few too many beer tokens as it appeared that the lovely Tiffany had also gone through her fair share!

Come Sunday and two bacon, egg and mushroom sarnies later I was ready for some racing. It's a shame Billy got passed for second in moto one but Jesus H Christ was Pourcel on a mission.

Everts was class out in front on his own so I decided to turn my attentions to Mr Crockard – I never noticed what great fun it is to watch the Crock Star ride WFO!

The noise when Tommy Gun crossed the line for third in moto two was immense and thoroughly deserved – fair play to him. As the last race of the day got off the line me and my mate were discussing that if Everts was pressured he might make a mistake and maybe just get beaten for a change! Well he did make a mistake but holy crap, how mega was his ride back to the front?

Congratulations to JDH and Steve Dixon for sorting such a brilliant weekend of GP action.

Farmer Stu, Warwickshire

PS My girlfriend has fallen in love with Billy Mac and it's her birthday soon so I was just wondering if it would be possible to get Mac 211 to sign one of his old race shirts? I would be eternally grateful and I think it would be the best present that I could ever get her!

Glad you enjoyed the GP so much! We've asked Billy to sign one of his old race shirts and you'll be pleased to know that he has. I bet what you really wanted was for us to send you one of Billy's signed shirts for Beccy's birthday but seeing as you didn't ask we won't – mwahahaha!

RANDOM RANTER!

To whom it may concern,
Just to let you know that I live above a shop.
Anthony, Dorset

Okay...

PANTS POSER

Middle of last season I twisted my knee while attempting a Damon Bradshaw (old school!) style block pass. Anyway, to cut a short story even shorter, it hurt like ***k and although I didn't do any long-term damage I decided to invest in a pair of the EVS Vision knee braces.

My problem is that I invested in some new kit (Fox 360) at the Dirt Bike Show and when I wear the braces there is not much give in the jeans and it is hard to move. I am starting to get used to the restriction but I was wondering whether any of the kit manufacturers have taken these bulky knee braces into consideration and if so could you point me in the right direction of some baggier fitting jeans.

Chris, Gloucestershire

My own personal favourite race pants for fit while wearing knee braces have to be the Troy Lee Designs Speed Equipment jobby wotsits. Not only are the pants roomy they also have a genuine leather inner-knee area which doesn't melt on my four-popper's exhaust and actually seems to protect my bike from my Asterisk braces.

MONSTER MURRAY!

Both my brother and I are very big fans of your magazine and especially like reading the Rage section.

I have a YZ85 and my brother has a KX65. We ride every week and my dad always takes the latest DBR to read – that's when he's not helping my brother to pick his bike up after crashing (I'm only kidding).

I really hope Billy Mac wins the British MX2 championship this year as I am a big fan of his. I'm also hoping you'll be able to tell me where I can buy some Monster Energy drink?
Murray, Scotland

As far as we're aware Monster Energy isn't available in the UK just yet which is kind of ironic when you consider the brand was born after the President of Hansen (that's the company who manufacturer Monster Energy) saw the amount of sales success Red Bull were enjoying in Britain.

It does appear that more and more of the American 'designer' energy drinks are headed to our shores so keep an eye out on the shelves of your local ASDA or Tesco (where you'll also find copies of DBR).

WHAT BIKE?

I'm Stephen and I'm 15 years old. I've been reading DBR for about two years and I think it's the best! I first jumped on a bike last year and fell in love with it. My dad has been teaching me ever since. My bike at the moment is a Kawasaki KDX200 and although it is a great bike it's a bit too quick to learn on so I was wondering what would be the best enduro bike to learn on?

Stephen, via email

Stephen, welcome to the world of off-road riding. If you're finding the KDX to be a bit beastly you might wanna think about getting a 125cc enduro-specific bike like a KTM EXC, Gas Gas or Husqvarna. All three of these Euro manufacturers make excellent bikes and you should be able to pick up a good secondhand – or even new – model by scouring the classifieds in weekly rag TMX.

TECHING THE ***S!

I'm just wondering if any of your readers have had the same problem I have with the new Alpinestars Tech 10s. My boots are just over six months old and they're worn out. I'm only a club rider and £300 for six months of wear is a lot of money to fork out.

According to the Alpinestars ad campaign these are the best boots on the market – if so they should not be falling apart after being worn about 20 times. I won't be able to go on my bike for a couple of weeks now as I'm going to have to work the weekends to buy some new boots. If there's a contact for Alpinestars in the UK you can put me on to it would be very helpful.

Karl, via email

We have heard a few things about Tech 10s not being the longest lasting boot on the market but they are quite possibly the highest performing (when it comes to flexibility, fit, rider to machine contact etc) and most supportive when used with their adjustable inner ankle brace system.

The trouble with some high performing products is that in order to work so well their longevity of use has suffer – take tyres and brake pads for example. At the end of the day your boots do take a lot of hammer and you can't expect them to last forever but we wouldn't be best pleased at spending around £600 a year on motocross boots either.

The good news is there's plenty of high quality boots to choose from these days such as the Gaerne SG10s and Sidi Crossfires as well as our old favourites the Alpinestars Tech 8s. If you'd like to contact Alpinestars' UK distributor the email address is enquiries@cisport.co.uk.



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DC SHOES

HOODSTAR HOODY & PACE SHOE

All Star Wars fans will remember the crazy antics of those adorable androids R2-D2 and C3PO so as a tribute to George – or was it Matt? – Lucas we've knocked up (not literally of course) a smelly short-ass droid of our own – DC-BO. But surprise surprise kiddies, it's not really an android at all! It's actually Tiff in an extra large DC Shoe Co Hoodstar hoody and some super-sleek Pace shoes. Haha – we so fooled you! Email: ukenquiries@dceurope.com



LAZER MX7 Hot Rod HELMET

The MX7 Hot Rod is Lazer's top of the range helmet and is basically the same as the one Stefan Everts has been running all year but with different graphics. The shell is made from a reinforced carbon and aramid multi directional composite fibre while inside the Coolmax liner is totally removable and washable and uses the FAS ventilation system to keep your noggin cool!

The MX7 comes in five different sizes (from XS to XL) with two separate sized shells and in a variety of colours – visit www.lazerhelmets.com to see them all.

Price: £169.99

Supplier: MDL Limited

01773 864420

MOTORBOOKS MOTOCROSS

One of Holy Moly's (www.holymoly.co.uk) rules for modern life is to always judge a book by its cover - it has been specifically designed to target a certain audience so you can pretty much tell whether you're going to like it or not.

With that in mind it's probably a given that you'll enjoy Steve Casper's new Motocross book - it's a book about motocross written by Steve Casper that features a picture of the GOAT (Ricky Carmichael) throwing out a fat whip. The moto-magic continues inside the full-colour 200-page book that's full of top-notch American motocross action imagery and informative reading matter about the sport and its athletes.

Price: £9.99

Supplier: dirtbikerider.com

01524 834030

SCIENCE IN SPORT

NOCTÉ DRINK

Quality sleep and recovery time are very important so the mad scientists at SIS have been busy brewing up this concoction that not only helps you nod off on a night time but it also helps aid recovery and boost adaptation! A cup of Nocté night-time drink promotes restful sleep and improves health, performance and immune function. It contains slow release proteins which enables supplementation of minerals such as zinc and magnesium throughout the night while you're asleep. Apparently the SIS boffins reckon this is the best time for zinc and magnesium supplementation.

Nocté is available in chocolate or vanilla flavour and is suitable for vegetarians. Price: Sachet £1.50

Tray of 15 sachets £20

Mugs are free with every two trays purchased

Supplier: scienceinsport.com

01254 246060





ONFIRE COPPINS TEE

Tiff loves fluffy things which might explain why she loves sheep. With CAS Honda's Josh Coppins being born and bred in New Zealand there's no need to explain why he loves sheep. As well as loving fluffy things Tiff also loves lovers of fluffy things which is probably why she loves Josh.

British-based clothing company Onfire also love Josh (we're not sure if there's any sheep-related reasoning to it or not). In fact they love Josh enough to create a Josh Coppins rider tee and we love that. If we love Josh and his tee, Onfire products in general and possibly even Tiffers too, does that mean by default we love sheep? Say it ain't so...

Price: £20

Supplier: onfire.co.uk

01689 842125



NO FEAR OPTIMAL-II DUNGEON HELMET

With a brand new shell design that has both forehead and chin air induction vents as well as exhausts to the rear, No Fear's new Optimal II helmet might just be the coolest thing on the track in this summer's heat! And seeing as they come in a range of sizes and colours – including this Misfits inspired Dungeon design – you're guaranteed to find something stylish to protect yo' bonce.

Price: £119.95

Supplier: nofearmx.com

+33 442 163604

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Price: Forks £1740 + VAT

Shock £640 + VAT

Supplier: wpsuspension.co.uk

01284 752102



PRO GRIP

KAWASAKI RACING TEAM KIT

If you've ever wanted to dress like one of Jan De Groot's boys but you haven't quite plucked up the courage to beg, steal or borrow Swordy's kit now's your chance to get some of your very own by splashing out some hard-earned cash.

The Pro Grip manufactured kit is now available from your local Team Green dealer and comes in sizes ranging from small (28 inch pants and S jersey) to mahoosive (40 and XXL) and is available in green, green or green.

Price: Jersey £40.45

Pants £104.95

Gay socks (models own)

Supplier: kawasaki.co.uk

01628 856600



GSP

STEEL STOOL STAND

I'll always remember sitting around the log fire with my family on Christmas Day playing crappy board games like Guess Who – the game that cracks the case of the mystery face. The one time that particularly stays fresh in my mind was when my brother – who I suspect may have ESP – rumbled my character straight away.

"Are you made of round-tube mild steel?" he asked. "Why yes," I replied. "And are you plated with Zinc to stop corrosion which also gives you an ultra trick finish?" he continued. "Once more you are correct," I said.

"Might there be a blonde Tiffnoire sat atop of you too?" came the query. "Indeed," I gasped.

"Are you a GSP steel stool stand?" he guessed. "My goodness," I said guffawing. "You've rumbled me!"

Oh how we laughed...

Price: £34.99

Supplier: gspmx.com

01527 544504



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Q: How much is postage? **A:** ITS FREE, we never charge for delivery to anywhere in the UK or Ireland. We have no minimum order and if you order before 4pm we ship the same day so you can expect to take delivery in 1-2 working days.

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TOMMY SEARLE
MX2 8-3

"It's brilliant, I can't believe it – the best moment of my life so far. When Pourcel went past I was like 'no way' and there was this little tiny gap and I just went in there and got it. Get a good start and ride as hard as I can the whole race, that's all I did. I know I can do it now. Last year I made my debut in the British GP and in my first full season I've come back here for my first podium. It's a great achievement and I can't describe how pleased I am. It was good to have all the fans behind me and I could really hear them cheering on that last lap. I will keep plugging away now and race as hard as I can every week. Maybe some more podiums this year could be possible – I also want to move up in the championship."

Vroom 101!

Everts wins again blah, blah, blah, Philippaerts tops MX2 and Billy Mac goes fourth but the big news at Matterley Basin's inaugural GP is a stunning debut podium for Tommy Gun

Words by Alex Hodgkinson Photos by Sutty



BILLY MACKENZIE

MX2 3-8

*"I had a ***t qualifying and just made it through so I had a bad pick for the gate. But I held it wide open at the start of the first race around the outside, found some good lines through the first few corners and went from somewhere like 15th to fifth."*

"When I got through to second I began closing on Philippaerts but I started tightening up and made a few mistakes. Then Pourcel was on me and I missed a gear before the triple the last two laps and that's why he got by. My hand was fine – I had four injections so it was pretty numb but I found it hard to have a good grip on the bars."

"In the second race after the whoops I came into the berm too hard, blew through it and went off the track. I lost so much time getting back on and had to wait for a gap or I'd have been t-boned."

STEFAN EVERTS and David Philippaerts win the races as MXGP comes to Matterley Basin but it's Billy MacKenzie and Tommy Searle who win the hearts of the biggest, most vociferous crowd on the GP circuit!

Giuseppe Luongo has already pencilled in two GPs for the Hampshire track next year because of his admiration for the UK fans – "the most enthusiastic in the world" – and the green spaces on the hillsides prove only one thing, that there's room for 100,000.

Johnny D-H is almost apologetic – "It's not fair. I only had six days to build the track and

there was so much more I could have done" – as local planning officers and rejected councillors create pre-race pandemonium but his track provides fantastic racing and is more demanding than even the riders think it will be at first sight.

But the day is all about Billy Mac and Tommy Gun! One week before in Italy the Scot doesn't even know if he will start – "I'm wasting my time riding round like this. If the specialist says I need an operation on my hand then I've got to do it straight away."

But the doc reckons he'll be okay with rest

and a splint to support the fractured fifth metacarpal. There are signs of speed between two crashes in qualifying and 211 does the biz on race day. Okay, he would have won if fully fit but Billy even passes eventual winner DP during their 20-minute chase of featherweight holeshooter Nicolas Aubin and it takes a mega pass by series leader Christophe Pourcel to push the Scot down to third at the death.

And the DBR columnist is on course for top three again in race two until he runs off the track on lap three. The mistake costs him the podium on the tie-break. "Make it short. ■





STEFAN EVERTS
MX1 1-1

#7
"I hit a rock with my frame [in the second race], the back wheel came out of the rut and I slid out. Josh passed me but I was aggressive and got him back quickly. I was chasing Tanel but I was having a hard time around the first part of the track because it was so fast and the roost coming up from all the dust made it difficult to see the lines. I made my way through one by one and then pushed quite hard to have a small gap after a few laps. After the small crash it made a good show for the fans and I was pleased with how I could still take the race."



DAVID PHILIPPAERTS
MX2 1-2

#19
"In the first race I was trying as hard as I could to pass Aubin and once I got through I could start to make my own pace. It was a pretty simple race. In the second heat I was again trying to find that pace but after the first 20 minutes I found it difficult and Cairoli was quicker."



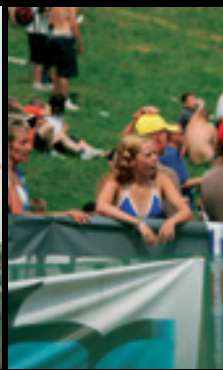
JOSH COPPINS
MX1 3-5

#3
"I only started riding 18 days ago. I'm far from 100 per cent fit and had problems riding the fast pace. I was not so smooth and was fighting with the bike. First moto was not so bad...second moto was tough, I broke my goggles and had a lot of dirt in my eyes. At the end I can say this was not a bad comeback race at all."



MARC DE REUVER
MX2 DNF-17

#13
"The bike was working well but I could not get going with the track and it has been a disaster for the championship this weekend. I don't know how many points I am behind now."



CARL NUNN

MX2 11-9

"I got bad starts and that was it really – in the second race Tommy came over on me on the start and I had to pretty much stop because he hit my front wheel and the first race I just missed the start completely. Looking at my times in the second race it was okay, my pace was good but I was too far back to do anything about it – I made a few passes but that was as much as you were going to make out there. The track was fun to ride and the jumps were all really nice."



I'm pissed off. That cost me the bonus for top three. I got caught up in the train. I was able to up my pace at the end but it was too late by then."

But money isn't everything and Billy's error opens the door for Searle. His parting words in Italy had been "I want a podium next week!" and after cake and candles on Tuesday the now 17-year-old keeps his word.

It doesn't look on as he loses a place late on to Swanny in race one – "Aubin made a mistake, I had to go off line and Gareth nipped through" – but the leaderboard is turned upside

down in race two after a first lap crash for Pourcel and a collision next time round between Swanny and Guarneri.

Tommy inherits third when MacKenzie runs out of track and he fends off all-comers to the end. The last lap is amazing. Sebastien Pourcel finally dislodges Goncalves from fourth two laps from the end and a third of the way round the final tour the Frenchie dives under the English teenager running him high into the tapes. So high that he has what he considers to be the inside line through the valley into the next turn.

Tommy shoots through a gap which simply

wasn't there, Pourcel is stunned and the boy from Kent puts his head down to the chequered flag to be greeted by a throng of well-wishers led by Jamie Dobb. "I didn't know it was for the podium but I wasn't going to give up my place on the last lap without a fight!"

Two-thirds of the Nations team for September have picked themselves but Billy and Tommy are not the only Brits to raise a smile.

Carl Nunn and James Noble are consistent as usual and there are home-grown points-scorers all the way down the pack but





SEBASTIEN POURCEL

MX2 10-4

"In the second heat I had a better start – I was 15th or 16th in the first corner and I gained a position each lap. I just had some troubles when I came behind Goncalves who was fourth. I didn't find the way to pass him so I let him go to recover. Then I passed him, came back behind Searle and passed him but I didn't close the door and he passed me back in the last lap for the third spot."

GLEN PHILLIPS

MX1 23-22

"It's not been a bad day but I spent too much time on the deck and mopping up blood! I'm a bit disappointed that I didn't make points but that's due to unfortunate circumstances like nearly getting my nose broken by a rock in the second race – I was in the points but had to stop and clean all the blood off my goggles."

TOM CHURCH

MX2 DNF-21

"The GP didn't really go that well. I crashed on the first lap of the first race and bent the bike pretty badly so that was that. In the second moto I got a pretty good start but couldn't really live with the pace of those guys. I'm still finding my feet with the speed at grands prix this year but it is getting better."

JONATHAN BARRAGAN

MX1 12-6

"The first race was really bad luck because I crashed when someone hit me and then I had to fight back to 12th. The second moto was an improvement but again I started badly and had to regain a bunch of positions from around 14th place."



JAMES NOBLE

MX1 11-12

"First race didn't go brilliantly, I struggled to get going and ended up 11th. The second race I wasn't going too bad at the start then I slipped off and struggled to get going again but I picked it up towards the end and nipped past Nev and Julien Bill with about three laps to go. The track was a little bit fast and down to the rock in places and real hard underneath but I think if it hadn't been so dry it would have been a lot better. We haven't had this much hot weather in England for a long while and they did the best they could."

BRAD ANDERSON

MX2 DNF-16

"It could've been better. The first race I got a bad start, fought through, fell off and had to fight through again and got into the points but the bike broke – it was nobody's fault, just one of those things. I got another bad start in the second and fell off on the first couple of laps but got back up to 16th which I was quite happy with but it would have been a lot better if I'd stayed on."

WAYNE SMITH

MX2 DNQ

"I'm absolutely gutted. The track was very fast and I had a problem with my bike – basically where you gated was where you finished and I had a crap start. The last chance we were in up until the last few seconds before the flag went out."

TYLA RATTRAY

MX2 17-15

"It's been a tough weekend and the longest of my career. I have been in a lot of pain since Italy and it hasn't eased off that much. Normally I'm pushing right away to get up near the front or trying to break away but today I could not do it and riders were passing me. In the second heat I got a better start but I couldn't give the race 100 per cent and I was hesitant of catching and damaging my ankle again. I was riding safe on the right-hand corners and keeping on the pegs."

MARK JONES

MX1 13-16

"Qualifying went good so I didn't have a bad pick on the line and I got a good start in the first one but the pace was real quick and it took me by surprise and I dropped back but I came through to 13th which I was happy with. In the second I gated ninth and was keeping with the guys in front but I came out of a corner with about 20 minutes gone and the back end stood out and I went down and lost some places but I came back through to 16th."



KEVIN STRIJBOS

MX1 4-2

"I am happy with second even if my first race was not so good because of a bad start. I came back from 15th to fourth and up to the back of Josh and Ken but I could not pass them. In the second moto I felt better and faster and was trying to overtake Steve for the lead but I couldn't find a way through and Stefan caught us back up. I was pushing hard at the end but as usual passing Stefan was not easy! The track was not too bad. On some corners it was too dusty but it was the same for everyone."

#24

brit gp



deserving of a special mention are Ray Rowson, the Crock Star and Josh.

The 17-year-old from Shrewsbury – as Dave Williams reminds me a dozen times over the weekend – only gets three points but he shows he's not intimidated by big names and leads Tyla Rattray both days. In his heat the only man to pass Ray is GP winner Philippaerts. "I can't

believe it myself either. I came here just hoping to qualify."

And Gordy gets a seventh in race one, less than half-a-minute down on Everts despite two falls with the second fastest lap of the race during his late charge past Noble, Bill, Leuret and Vico. And De Dycker's fastest lap of the day was in the early laps of the race.

The British championship leader eventually makes a hard pass for second on team-mate Coppins but Josh shrugs it off. "I've only been back on a bike for 18 days and shouldn't have raced until Sweden but this is the British GP and I rode for the team. I don't think Ken wanted to be beaten by me in our first race together after injury. I'm still far from





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CEDRIC MELOTTE
MX1 5-8

"I had a small problem with my back today and had a lot of pain. I needed an injection to race but I did not want to give up because I was feeling mentally much better. I am still physically not 100 per cent and my riding style needs a high level of fitness."



MARK HUCKLEBRIDGE
MX1 DNQ

"I was struggling a bit in first practice then we swapped bikes over and made a few changes and in second practice it was going awesome – I felt really comfortable and the track was riding really good and I think I was 17th. I went out in qualifying and they'd watered the track in a few corners and I went down twice and got held up behind a few people on some jumps. Then you get to the last 10 minutes and you're still not in and you start to panic and it just went to pieces and I couldn't get a lap in."



CHRISTOPHE POURCEL
MX2 2-12

"In the first heat I got a second position despite a bad start and a small crash in the second lap. The second start was pretty difficult for me – Cairoli pushed over Gundersen and we touched our handlebars with Aubin! I was maybe 20th and in a corner I crashed and damaged the handlebar and the clutch lever. I took time to repair it and when I started I was far behind everyone. I knew that it was possible to come back in the points even if today it was difficult to pass on this fast layout. Maybe I could have gained two or three places but I took enough risks during the race."



WRENCING FOR TOMMY

Giz Edmonds on life with the teen sensation

"Considering that I didn't know Tommy before the start of the season I'd say that we've formed a very good relationship both professionally and personally. He's great fun to work with but at the same time he's very professional. We know when we need to get on and get stuff done and also when to enjoy ourselves."

"I guess both being relatively young means that we have quite a lot in common and we talk about all sorts of stuff both at the track and away from the races. Every weekend we learn more about each other which means we can trust each other more and more."

"Before the British GP it wasn't really any different to any other GP. We talked things through, walked the track together, looked at lines and stuff like that. Tommy likes to try and keep himself chilled out before a race so I just leave him alone to get himself prepared."

"While we're both in the waiting zone I start to talk to him and try and put positive thoughts into his head. He knows that he can get out of the gate well now and his confidence in the first corner is getting better every week. He also knows that he has the

speed to run up front at the GPs and that his speed is good enough to win. Every week he gets more and more confident so I just try and remind him that he can do it and that if he rides like he's capable then he'll get great results."

"During the race I give Tommy his lap times but on the first lap I just let him know how far behind the leader he is. As the race progresses I keep an eye on his lap times and if they drop off – which they didn't at Matterley – then I will tell him to up his pace. Mainly I tell him to keep on attacking the course and thinking about racing hard and to look for lines. I make sure that he keeps his focus."

"During the lead up to the British GP I didn't really think about it too much, mainly because the team was really busy as we had the Italian GP the weekend before. I didn't feel under any more pressure than I do at other GPs because I'd prepared the bike as best as I could so there was nothing more I could do. Once I got to the race that changed a bit because of the number of the British fans. There were so many air horns going off while we were in the waiting zone that I did start to get butterflies in my stomach."

"Tommy dealt with the weekend amazingly, especially considering the amount of media coverage he's been getting in recent months. As much as people have been building him up he wasn't too nervous, although he was a little edgy before the start of the first race. He was even quieter than he is normally."

"Jamie [Dobb] had a chat to him before the second moto and got him fired up. I could see when he came into the waiting zone that he was up for it – I knew he was going to have a good ride. He fought hard all race, didn't tire and didn't give in. Even when Pourcel passed him he didn't give in and passed him straight back. He deserved his result. He's been working extremely hard this season and I think it showed in the second moto."

100 per cent fit and was fighting the bike in the first race but I was a second closer to the pace each session on Saturday and I got the podium I wanted even though I got dirt in my eyes when my goggles broke in race two."

And Gordy? The Ulsterman's returned to his recent ways, ending the day with the skin taken off his back early in race two.

So foreigners take the day but we have got used to seeing Everts and Philippaerts on the podium recently. For Stefan even a fall in race two – "I hit a rock and the rear wheel jumped out of the rut" – can't prevent his 13th moto win

on the trot as the opposition crumble. Ramon defends his lead for three whole turns when the champ turns the screws.

And David is on a roll – 137 points out of 150 in 15 days have made him a title candidate again and Christophe Pourcel's error in race two helps the Italian bite a chunk out of the points difference. Just as well for KTM because Rattray and De Reuver are both wrecked – the South African adding an ankle injury to his strapped up shoulder and the Dutchman going from GP winner to nobody in a fortnight.

Tony Cairoli passes his compatriot in race

two for an important maximum score but the champ is still seeking consistency after a first race sixth in which he spends 30 minutes desperately trying to pass Gundersen. "He's a difficult man to pass," reckons the Italian.

So Britain has a new mainland GP venue and since Giuseppe wooed the local dignitaries the new Winchester council seem to like us more than the mob who got kicked out. Perhaps there is a little bit of justice in the world and those hillsides should be jammed in September.



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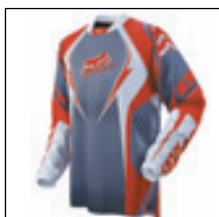
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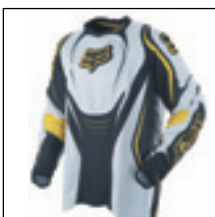
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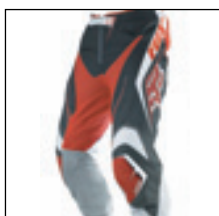
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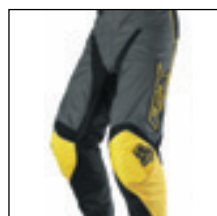
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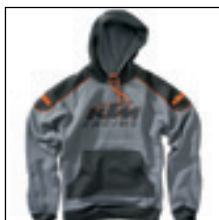
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TANEL LEOK
MX1 6-4

"I think it is clear to anyone that Stefan is on a tremendous roll at the moment. Although the season is only halfway he is looking very good for the championship unless something drastic happens. I am focused at getting back the number two spot in the championship but it is a tough job since Stribos, De Dycker and Ramon are all going well at the moment. I am happy that I can still hang in there on one of my lesser days and when I have another good day I can hopefully turn the tables."

GORDON CROCKARD
MX1 7-DNF

"First race it was difficult to pass James Noble but even before that I was on the ground after hitting Priem and Barragan all in one go. I got back going and was behind James but I was eating loads of roost and I lost the front wheel trying to square off a corner. I got past James only to sink into a big berm and he got ahead again so I developed Tourettes for a few laps but I put in some fast laps and picked people off and finished seventh."

"In the second race at the end of the whoops on the first lap I went over the bars and I got hit and that was race over. But the first race was my best result since 2004 so lots of positives - I just need to keep the momentum going now."



STEVE RAMON
MX1 14-3

"I was leading the first moto at the start but jumping the downhill I lost the front wheel. I slid down and had a hard crash. I pushed really hard to close the gap to the others and 14th was okay. In the second moto I started well again and was right behind Stefan when he made the mistake so I had the lead. Towards the end there though I was getting tired because that first moto had been tough and I had to slow down a little bit."

RESULTS - ROUND EIGHT

MX1

1	Stefan Everts	(Rinaldi Yamaha)	25+25=50
2	Kevin Stribos	(Team Suzuki)	18+22=40
3	Josh Coppins	(CAS Honda)	20+16=36
4	Ken De Dycker	(CAS Honda)	22+14=36
5	Tanel Leok	(Motorex Kawasaki)	15+18=33
6	Cedric Melotte	(Rinaldi Yamaha)	16+13=29
7	Steve Ramon	(Team Suzuki)	7+20=27
8	Jonathan Barragan	(Red Bull KTM)	9+15=24
9	Francisco Garcia Vico	(Martin Honda)	13+11=24
10	James Noble	(RWJ Honda)	10+9=19
11	Julien Bill	(Bike-It/Dixon Yamaha)	11+8=19
13	Gordon Crockard	(Wulfspport Honda)	14+0=14
14	Mark Jones	(PAR Honda)	8+5=13
18	Neville Bradshaw	(Motovision Suzuki)	1+6=7

MX2

1	David Philippaerts	(Champ KTM)	25+22=47
2	Antonio Cairoli	(De Carli Yamaha)	15+25=40
3	Tommy Searle	(Molson Kawasaki)	13+20=33
4	Billy MacKenzie	(Bike-It/Dixon Yamaha)	20+13=33
5	Kenneth Gundersen	(Ricci Yamaha)	16+15=31
6	Christophe Pourcel	(GPKR Kawasaki)	22+9=31
7	Sebastien Pourcel	(GPKR Kawasaki)	11+18=29
8	Rui Goncalves	(Silver Action KTM)	9+16=25
9	Carl Nunn	(Champ KTM)	10+12=22
10	Anthony Boissere	(PSM Casola Yamaha)	7+14=21
14	Gareth Swanepoel	(Molson Kawasaki)	14+0=14
19	Brad Anderson	(Pioneer Yamaha)	0+5=5
21	Shaun Simpson	(Wulfspport Honda)	2+2=4
23	Ray Rowson	(Molson Kawasaki)	3+0=3
25	Jason Dougan	(Moggstar KTM)	1+0=1



ANTONIO CAIROLI
MX2 6-1

"I wanted to win the second race because I need the points for the championship."





FIRST IMPRESSION'S FAST!

It's sweeter than a can of SuttaDawg Energy and makes you faster than pasta – our CRF rocks!

Words by Suttty Photos by Ray Chuss

THE BIG Bang hourmeter says I've only notched up 10.9 hours on the Honda CRF450 magazine machine but I can honestly say that those 654 minutes have to be the most fun (or funningest as the Yanks might say) moments I've ever had on two wheels.

I've got to admit that the first time I rode a CRF450 – a 2003 model – I found it to be quite uninspiring and dull. There were bag-loads of usable power – which was nice – but I found it was a bit of a pig to turn when compared to the ultra-twitchy KTM SX250 two-stroke the magazine was running as a test-rig back then.

Honda changed the CRF's chassis in 2005 which helped things considerably and another reshuffle for '06 has seen the front of the engine rotated downwards in the frame. This lowers the crankshaft by a minuscule five millimetres which in turn lowers the bike's centre of gravity. Other majorish mods for '06 include replacing the subframe and lowering the radiators by five mm too.

The improvements the Honda technicians implemented make a real difference proving the Honda techs practice what the Honda PR department preaches...hate something, change something, hate something, change something, make something better. In this case that something is the CRF450.

They've basically turned a model of machine I felt indifferent about riding into a bike that's a blast to ride and one that's injected a certain je ne sais quoi oh-so very special into the

enjoyment levels of my racing.

It's not just the Honda techs who've improved on their product though. I genuinely believe the intense pimping and re-working the CRF underwent under the magical hands of Wakker and myself have helped make a great bike grrrrrrrrreat. Tony the Tiger would be stoked!

If you read last month's instalment of magazine machine you'll remember that every product chosen for that bike was chosen for a reason. I agree most of the added parts look pretty but there's not much on there that's fitted purely for posing purposes.

The red anodised 22mm off-set MBO clamps have helped tighten things up in the steering department (they're funky and functional) and using a good tyre up front helps immensely.

While we're on the subject of tyres I can confirm that the CRF chews the rears up at an alarming rate so if any tyre companies out there wanna permanently hook a brother up I'd be most grateful. Something that's lasting longer than the tyres are the smartly selected Supersprox Stealth sprockets and the high-quality Iris O-ring chain that are holding up much better than I could ever have imagined or hoped. So what else is hot?

The part I'm probably most pleased with – from a riding point of view – is the SDG stepped-seat. It's not just the little ledge that helps keep your cheeks in the right place, the

cover material is super-grippy but not to the extent you go from full moon to turkey 20 times in a moto.

I'm also extremely pumped with the 2C wheels. I've done almost 11 hours riding on them – checking the spokes after each session – and they just haven't needed servicing like most wheels do. In fact, they've only seen a spoke key once and that was when I was lending it out to fellow racer. I can only assume that the materials used in their construction are top-notch and the wheel-builder himself is some sort of wheel-building legend.

Speaking of legends, Geoff really came up trumps by choosing the FMF exhaust system – a Megabomb front pipe matched with a Factory 4.1 silencer – as our CRF is very quiet but still indecently fast. How fast? Ask TC, he's still smarting from being passed by the CRF and my bad-self (in a corner) t'other Wednesday night at Rhayader. Take that Muncher (did you see that kiddie, indeed)!

Aside from taking TC to the ropes at Rhayader our magazine machine has also seen serious race action at the Dean Moor round of the British Masters series under the expert control of Amateur Open championship leader Richard-Mike Jones and the erratic control of myself. It's also been spotted at two rounds of the WOR Motul GBHS series underneath me, a Gas Gas and a bunch of other wayward enduro bikes/riders/a bush etc. You can read all about that on page 92!



Fast n' flash! Cunning mods mean that the CRF looks good and works, er, good as well

Unfair advantage?

What's more – two or four?

You may or may not be aware or you just may or may not care but I spent most of the early part of the season using Wakker's KX250 magazine machine at a variety of events. The '06 KX250 is without doubt one of the most enjoyable two-strokes to ride and seeing as we had both bikes on hand at the maiden outing of the CRF450 we decided to put them head-to-head – four-stroke against two – to find which was fastest over a timed lap of the Marshfield circuit.

As Godfrey is so technically minded we hooked him up with a stopwatch and told him to time the laps. Then I did one warm-up lap and one timed fast lap (if you can call it that – GW) on each bike.

Out on the track I felt like I could ride the KX faster than I could ride the Honda. The lighter feel to the bike helped me ride much more aggressively without losing control or losing time. With this in mind I was stunned when I found out I was three seconds faster on the CRF! Heck, even radical Ray Chuss was rocked by the result saying "bloody hell – you looked miles quicker on the two-stroke"...

Obviously, it would be foolish to say that the Honda is better than the Kawasaki or the four-bangers are better than the two-poppers but it certainly adds some fuel to the what's best debate. And, yes, we're aware it's not totally fair to put a pimped up CRF450 against a bog-stock KX250 and the lap-times of one rider on one track aren't conclusive and blah blah blah blah de blah blah blah...

"I remember when this was all fields..."



Problematic parts!

All that glitters ain't gold

While I'm generally upbeat about the performance of the CRF and the bits we've fitted there are a couple of products that haven't behaved quite the way we'd expected.

The first problematic part has been the Sunline billet gas-cap vent although this problem isn't just isolated to the Sunline brand – this is something I've seen on many brands of the billet style vent-tubes.

Inside the ally part is a small ball bearing that acts as a one-way valve letting air in but no fuel out. In super-damp conditions – or if dirt finds its way into the workings – the ball can stick. Sometimes it'll stick in the open position and the tank can breathe but other times it'll stick closed and you're left with a bike that's starved of fuel.

So what happens is this... You'll be riding along and bluuuuuurgh your bike will seemingly run out of fuel.

The first thing most people will do is check to see if there's any fuel left in the tank. As soon as you remove the gas-cap the tank is vented once more so when you try and start your bike it will run fine until the carb runs free of fuel again. Chances are you won't bother to check the fuel level twice so the tank can't breathe and you end up pushing your bike back to the van and sulking because your sexy scooter won't start. Boo-frickety-hoo!

But there's no need to go chucking your little blingastic billet vents away just yet because there's a simple test to see if your valve's okay or nay! Simply remove the tube and shake it. If you can hear something rattling – that's the ball inside and not your 'lucky' charm bracelet – then your valve is good to go. If you can't hear a thing you need to clean the valve as best you can with carb cleaner and compressed air until it does rattle.

The second part that's failed to make me totally happy has been the Renthal Kevlar dual-compound grips – but they're not all bad. In fact since gluing these puppies onto my Twinwalls I haven't had anything that resembles a blister. The grips feel super soft and grippy and the main section is wearing pretty well too. So why exactly am I dissatisfied with them?

It seems that the bonding process between the tubular section of the grips and the ends isn't as successful as with the full rubber material grips. Both ends have popped off prematurely which is annoying when you see how well the rest of the grip is resisting wear. Again, it's something we're assured has been sorted by Renthal so we're more than keen to try a second pair of these sensual super-soft grips.







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VISION EXPRESS!

Two years ago, with inspired signing Tanel Leok firing on all cylinders, Motovision Suzuki were one of the heavyweights of the British MX scene. A shortage of funds saw them lose momentum in '05 but with two young stars finding their feet in '06 Mark Chamberlain's men could be on the verge of revisiting their former glories...

Words and photos by Jonathan Bentman

TWO SEASONS ago Motovision Suzuki were knocking on the door of the big league. With savvy signing Tanel Leok the team catapulted itself from the midfield to potential championship winners in British motocross. But drawn by ever bigger pay cheques Tanel left at the end of the season and without the funding for a top GP rider Motovision Suzuki has slipped agonisingly back into the chasing pack

But that could all change soon. Okay, the Jussi Vehvilainen signing turned sour after not one but two shoulder reconstructions but isn't team number two Neville Bradshaw coming on? And the young student Jake Nicholls showed at the Hawkstone Park U21s that he too has the talent. And there's some chance that Suzuki GB could yet step-up their involvement. This is a team with big potential.

So here's how it looks according to team boss Mark Chamberlain...

ON LOSING LEOK...

"Tanel Leok was a good signing and we knew what he could do. It was unfortunate we couldn't keep him. We did try hard to keep him but the way things worked out it was a hard ask for us at the time, it was a lot to ask Suzuki GB to step up to where we wanted them to step up. They only benefit from the UK scene and what we needed was a complete world championship strategy and it was too much too soon at that stage.

"We accepted it, at the end of the day we just love going racing – that's the main thing. But I'm not going to lie about it, I'd love to challenge CAS and those guys at the top but we haven't got the budget. Our budget is nowhere near what Josh is paid to race so we've got to be realistic.

"The end decision lies with which way Suzuki wants to go. It does take money to win a championship and the problem that we always have is that to win the British championship you need someone who's capable of riding at least top-five in the world

Jake Nicholls was signed to contest the U21 series – a win at Hawkstone justified his place



so you've got to go to the world championship or you won't get a rider to sign for you.

"Jussi was probably the only one we could sign because he wanted a lesser programme for this year because he wanted time to heal – and then, unfortunately, he got injured again – but he wanted to ease his programme up and that was the only way I could see us running top-three without taking a GP rider. Always you are chasing your tail unless you can throw a lot of money at the job.

"It's like £100,000 plus-plus-plus to get the right rider package and that's a lot of money. We've got some good sponsors we're talking to at the moment, a lot of things are looking positive and we want to take the team back into the world championship next year. But it all depends how things pan out.

"It all happens in the next two months as well with Suzuki. Hopefully if they can give us an indication as well then we can give them a better opportunity to get the results they want – and they do want to win for sure. But it's hard, they've got a move to Milton Keynes, they've got a lot of other programmes on as well so I'm realistic enough to know they're not going to give us a blank cheque and say crack on.

"But if we can get a good package of sponsors together and they then decide where they want to be then we can go forward. Maybe we won't win straight away but we can go top-three and look at the next two or three years for challenging for the top spot. Or if we get lucky we can win – it's motocross, anything can happen.

"Jussi was signed to run – although you can never buy your result – top-three. But he had an injury in pre-season testing late in December, damaging his shoulder. We weren't too sure how bad it was and he wanted to continue riding which turned out to be a mistake, I guess. In hindsight I should have told him to get it done but Jussi's a tough guy – too tough – and as it went on we could see he was struggling.



Jussi Vehvilainen has been sidelined by not one but two serious shoulder injuries



After an early season shoulder dislocation Nev Bradshaw's coming back to form

"We almost put him on a 250F before the start of the season as the 450 was maybe too much for him, then we decided just to run with it and see how we went. After a couple of races it was obvious his shoulder needed to be sorted out, he wasn't doing himself any justice. The team, the bikes were all good but people don't necessarily know that, they just point and see that Jussi came off another bike and now he's not doing so well. So I thought it wasn't doing any good for Suzuki or us with him going down that road.

"So we got him booked in for an operation back in Finland and it turned out to be far worse than he thought as well. He had two detached muscles and a bit of bone floating around on his right shoulder. So obviously he had that operated on. But while he was in he said to the doctor that his left shoulder was feeling a bit funny. So they tested that and he's ended up having an op on that as well because it had two tears that were halfway torn. So how he even rode...it's a credit to how tough and good he is.

"So we hope he'll be back in time for the last two British and we'll put him on a 250F and I really hope he'll be able to show what he's capable of. I'm still a big believer in him." ►



Motovision big cheese Mark Chamberlain



Matt Hutchins builds the motors for Jussi and Nev...



ON BACKING BRADSHAW...

"Not a lot of people know that Neville dislocated his shoulder after the second round of the Maxxis. It's taken him several weeks to get the strength back. It was a bad dislocation, it wasn't a separation like you hear with some of the American riders, it was a proper full-on dislocation – it sat out for three hours and trying to get it back in was so hard they had to put him out. He's done so well to come back from that and to now be getting back into the top-five."

"Nev's coming back stronger. Last weekend [Landrake] he should have been on the podium with third but there was a problem in the second race with half-a-lap to go otherwise he would have been third overall which is unfortunate for him and the team. But the good thing is he's coming on strong and we're positive that he can be on the podium before the end of the season."

"With Nev I've always thought of him as top-five. In my mind Nev is a good rider, good enough to be aiming at people like Noble and those guys now – he should be starting to reel them in but it's a bit difficult when you are not doing the GPs. I say that but it's opened my eyes not going [to the GPs], the level at the top of the four-strokes with the likes of Mark Jones,

Brad Anderson and Wayne Smith. They're such good riders that the quality of racing is good week-in, week-out whereas a few years ago the cream was always at the grands prix. But the way the whole GP thing is, it leaves more competitive riders at home. So from a point of view of bringing on a rider you can get away with it [not doing GPs]."

ON NEW BOY NICHOLLS...

"The ideal we had been looking for was an U21 rider as our third man. We helped Jake [Nicholls] a bit last year with kit and such in the schoolboys and he had some good races so he was a first consideration. He came to the last two rounds of the British last year and he rode well there as well."

"The bike, his RM-Z250, hasn't been massively developed. But the engine is the same as the Kawasaki and the changes they've made we've already made to our race bike too. Our bike has evolved from last year and we have factory A-kit Showa suspension so it really is a good package. It may have not changed lookwise but in my opinion we have got, for sure, a bike good enough to ride top-five in MX2 when Jake is ready."



...who feels right at home on the 450

"Jake's been up and down with his latest crash and he broke his hand earlier in the season but he's coming on good. He won the U21 overall at Hawkstone Park which was a step in the right direction. We're just trying to keep him settled and building. There's no pressure on Jake, we just want him to develop in his own time and at his own speed."

ON MX IN LIMBO...

"The RM-Z250F – the new model, the 2007 – will be an important one for Suzuki. That's the biggest marketplace right now. With the 450s people are undecided, maybe they're too powerful, maybe they'll go back to two-strokes. To me at this time motocross is in a little bit of a limbo."

"A lot of people are undecided on what to race. Even questioning is it too expensive to carry on? Should they instead go 250F because it's really enjoyable to ride? Should they ride two-stroke again even if it's not the in-thing to have? So it's in limbo, especially in England because the economy isn't so strong that people are just going for it and not really worrying. People are sitting back a little bit and that's reflecting on motocross at the moment."



NEVILLE BRADSHAW

In his own words...

"I started off pretty slowly after training hard in the off-season. This year I wanted to work into the season. I was doing a lot of cycling, running and swimming at home and a little bit of riding. And I really wanted to work slowly into it and start peaking about now.

"But the first round I didn't do so good, having problems with goggles and stuff. At Canada Heights I got my form back again, I felt like I was riding pretty good and got two fifths there. But three days after that I dislocated my shoulder. So it's been a mission, taking a few weeks off then starting again.

"I rode Matchams just to get some points and I got a 10th and a seventh which wasn't so bad. Since then we've been working hard to get my shoulder working again and this last weekend I felt like I was riding like I should.

"I'm quite a big guy so I had to ride a 250 real hard. So I went to a 450 with an open mind and the first year was just a learning year but I was

doing real good until I hurt my foot. I was qualifying for GPs.

"I like the big bike because you can ride a lot smoother. You do have to be a bit stronger – your training has to change quite a bit – but this year I feel very comfortable on it. Changing to the 450 was a good choice to make.

"The bike's already got a lot of power, it's not like we're trying to find more power, it's just that we're trying to move that power around. The way I ride is aggressively so we have to make the power suit that. If there's too much power at the bottom it hits too hard and you don't ride so smooth – for me it suits to have smooth power right through the powerband.

"With Motovision Suzuki it's been good. All the guys are awesome, they put so much time into it – they're real passionate about their racing. Mark let me stay at his house for a year and he didn't have to do that so I really appreciated that and so it's like family. Mark's dad is a good guy too – he puts things into perspective. Like I've had a bad race and he'll say "you know, you've come off an injury, you shouldn't be riding yet, in two weeks time you'll be better" and two weeks later I am riding better. The way he speaks to me, he's good."

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DIRT BIKE RIDER

ON MONEY...

"To make it to the top in British motocross and GPs you need sponsorship money and it has to come from outside the industry.

"If you look at the top teams in England most of the money going into those teams – to push them to the next level – is private funding. Whether it's out of their own pockets, because they are able to do it, or because they've got business connections which they are pulling into the equation to make it happen. That's the way it works. And that's because motocross isn't big enough in Europe at this time – apart from a few factory teams, Rinaldi, the Geboers team and KTM obviously. Everyone else relies on private sponsors to back them.

"It does make it more expensive having to compete against the likes of CAS and RWJ in the British championship but if you can get near or beat those guys the satisfaction from that is really good. And from a general motocross enthusiast's point of view I wouldn't want to see any of those guys not in the sport because they put so much into it and I've so much respect for anyone who puts money into motocross. It's the thing I love the most and if I had any more money I'd be putting more in to it too – so I take my hat off to them."

ON JOB DESCRIPTIONS...

"My job is to run Motovision the business and the race team as well. The team personnel starts with Matt Hutchins who has been with us now for three years, he also helps with some of the sponsors when he has time. His main job is building the engines for Jussi and Nev and he's also Jussi's main mechanic. He's also been working with Damien from Race Pace doing suspension work. Matt works full-time.

"Then we have Gareth, my brother, who's working at Motovision in the office full-time during the week but at the



Gareth Chamberlain helps make the Motovision team a family affair

weekends he does Nev's bike.

"My other brother Justin lends a hand from time to time too although he's not involved in Motovision the business. Justin produced the promotional DVD that we put together that helps the sponsors and we play it at the races for the public.

"And then we have Richard Addy who's been an understudy for the last couple of years. He's stepping up the ladder and now he's at a point where he's doing quite a lot of stuff midweek and being involved in the weekend. He's at college one day a week too on a motorcycle course. On race day he sorts whatever needs being done, taking stuff off the spare bike, putting it on the race bike, he's generally trying to understand it all. He takes the lap times and via the radio headset he tells the mechanic what the times are – sometimes the way the

tracks are set up you can't watch the screen and get the rider sorted so he relieves the pressure there. He's good at changing mousses as well.

"Next year, for sure, he'll be a full-time mechanic. He's building engines now, started doing suspension stuff, building wheels. He's a good kid. And that's a real positive thing, bringing someone on – I enjoy that aspect of racing whether it's a rider or a mechanic.

"Then there's Jake's mechanic, Mick 'Dundee' Day – he's Australian, obviously. He does all Jake's stuff on his 250F. He's full-time too. Because Jake can't drive yet he takes him practising as well, doing the bikes. So that's three full-time plus Gareth at the weekend. We all pull together, mum and dad too help at the weekends with the hospitality and cleaning the truck midweek."



Jake gets off to a flier at Matchams

JAKE NICHOLLS

In his own words...

"I didn't know what to expect for the first couple of races. But it went all right. I was just a bit worried at the start because I've never been very confident with starts and you really need good starts in the British. So I struggled a bit with that but I was getting, like, just outside top-10 in the first couple before I broke my hand. And that set me back four weeks.

"So I missed the second round of the U21s and the second round of the British championships which really messed it up championship-wise which is

frustrating and then I came back and worked hard.

"I won the third round of the U21s at Hawkstone which was real nice. I was confident I could get top three but not the win. So in the first race I got a good start and finished up third and in the second I got a good start and ended up first. I just felt good so I pushed and ended up winning.

"It gave me a boost because I was starting to feel frustrated because I hadn't been getting the results I wanted.

"At the start of the year I wasn't really sure what to do [in training]. There wasn't anyone telling me what to do so I was doing my own thing. But it turns out I was

doing pretty good. A lot of running. Riding Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday – so I've had lots of bike time.

"Last week I went to Dave Thorpe's and now I'm training on his regime which is really good, really tough, so I'm not lazy. I push myself really hard – but I'm still having fun, it's not a drag.

"Motovision are awesome, perfect for me. I'm quite a laidback guy and I like to have fun when I ride and Motovision are quite laidback as well. So I can talk to Mark about anything, even personal problems and stuff. It's perfect – I wouldn't want to be on another team. And the bikes are good too, I really can't complain. I'm really happy to be honest."

FLOOD ORANGE!

KTM land the first punch in the '07 battle of the bike launches with a massive 12 new models set to swamp the UK market...

Words by Tony Marshall and Geoff Walker Photos by Redeye

LAUNCHES DON'T come much bigger than KTM's '07 test fest where between our MX man Tony Marshall and enduro pilot Geoff Walker there were 12 new bikes to ride n' rate.

So DBR's very own version of Little n' Large were packed off to Austria (Tony getting away with a child's fare and Geoff in a cage in the hold to save on budget) for two action-packed days of testing, testing and more testing.

Here's what Sid and Eddie had to say...





Capacity: 124.8cc
Bore and stroke: 54mm x 54.5mm
Transmission: Six-speed
Carburettor: Keihin PWK 39
Front suspension: WP USD 48mm (300mm travel)
Rear suspension: WP PDS (335mm travel)
Front brake: 260mm disc
Rear brake: 220mm disc
Wheelbase: 1471mm
Seat height: 925mm
Dry weight: 89.5kg
Price: £4055

bike test



125 SX

When it comes to KTM bike launches their 125cc two-stroker has been the automatic first pick for me for the last few years – it's always a pleasure to ride and takes me back to the good old days when the little screamers were the only weapon to have in the then 125cc class.

For '07 I wasn't expecting any major development – just a few cosmetic changes to the stickers and plastics etc – but how wrong I was. Next year's SX125 has a completely new cylinder and cylinderhead which looks extremely compact. KTM are claiming an extra 1bhp over their '06 machine and the bike does feel a bit stronger than this year's model which came as quite a shock.

The motor is so strong coming out of the turns it sometimes doesn't feel like a 125 – almost like it's been over-bored. The motor is so responsive and the bottom-end hits with such a punch. The mid-range power is equally impressive and when you're higher up the rev range coming out of a fast turn or need that little extra to get you out of trouble it's always at hand.

The track was a good test of top-end power with its long climbing straight with three jumps providing a big challenge for the motor. This bike pulls so strong that I couldn't get the motor to bog on the landings no matter how hard I tried. Not once did the motor die on me or even think about dying – at one point I pulled a high gear a bit too soon and the engine still kept pulling.

I love riding 125s and even if I don't go as quickly on one as I used to it sure did feel like I was flying. This revs and revs and, from a distance, I bet I sounded like I was hauling!



Capacity: 249cc
Bore and stroke: 66.4mm x 72mm
Transmission: Five-speed
Carburettor: Keihin PWK 36 S AG
Front suspension: WP USD 48mm (300mm travel)
Rear suspension: WP PDS (335mm travel)
Front brake: 260mm disc
Rear brake: 220mm disc
Wheelbase: 1475mm
Seat height: 925mm
Dry weight: 95.4kg
Price: £4545



250 SX

I have to be honest and admit that 250 stroke bikes are not bikes I'm in a rush to throw my leg over – regardless of the manufacturer – but I was pleasantly surprised with KTM's '07 quarter-litre machine.

In the past I've always found them a handful and have always looked for ways to smooth out the power but this bike was more suited to my riding style straight out of the box. The jetting was a little on the rich side which helped to flatten out the power a bit making it, for me at least, easier to ride and allowing me to be a little more aggressive on the track. Saying that, the jetting was a bit irritating when I was play riding while waiting to get the riding shots done.

So with it being a bit rich on the jetting it felt like it needed the needle dropping by one to sharpen it up but it was still a lot of fun around the stony track. I didn't find myself getting into trouble with the rear end wanting to slide out of every turn. I felt like I could take a few liberties with it and I was getting away with them.

The top-end held onto the power well so I didn't lose too much when I over-revved it which is something I do from time to time (I know, bad technique!).

Coming down some of the hills and on fast parts of the track it was really stable but when hitting braking bumps the rear end wanted to keep smacking me up the arse and take me into turns on my front wheel. I did make this a bit better by adjusting the rebound on the front forks as it felt like they were packing and not returning quickly enough. With four bikes to test you don't always get the chance to play with settings...



Capacity: 249.4cc
Bore and stroke: 76mm x 55mm
Transmission: Six-speed
Carburettor: Keihin MX FCR39
Front suspension: WP USD 48mm (300mm travel)
Rear suspension: WP PDS (335mm travel)
Front brake: 260mm disc
Rear brake: 220mm disc
Wheelbase: 1475mm
Seat height: 925mm
Dry weight: 98.2kg
Price: £5045



250 SX-F

The other model in KTM's '07 range that I was really looking forward to riding was the 250F. My pick of the bunch from the '06 launch, in its first full year of production the 250F was a cracking bike. But development is the name of the game and staying still in such a competitive market is not an option so next year's 250 four-popper has a completely reworked chassis and features a smart new look.

The first thing that came to mind before I got onto the track was that this bike feels wider than its predecessor. Initially I felt this wasn't a necessary change until I got some time on it under my belt and fell more in love with it lap after lap.

With it being that slight bit wider I had more feel with the bike between my legs and felt in more control and part of the bike. In a straight line the 250F is unreal – not once did I have any moments where my heart was in my mouth.

The rear shock soaked up the hard landings with complete ease and under power it tracked in a straight line without the rear end ever really feeling like it wanted to step out. Again, there were a few times coming into braking bumps when the rear wanted to kick me. But I didn't need to change any settings, just my riding position. I moved my bodyweight back a little so it was more central and the arse kicking stopped immediately which let me carry more speed into the turns.

The front end of this bike is so well balanced with the rear making it super-positive coming into and going around turns. There were times I didn't think I was going to hold onto it through some corners let alone get on the line I was aiming for but it went where I wanted again and again. The bike made it easy for me.

The motor didn't feel any stronger than this year's model, just a bit more responsive whenever it was needed. It's really torquey so there's plenty of power – even on the odd occasion when I was a bit lazy with the gearbox and should have gone down a gear it just kept pulling.

The track layout provided a good test of how strong this bike really does pull and uphill landings from fast jumps are such a good test for four-bangers as the revs can die or bog when you touch down. But not with this bike.

The brakes work so well but what else would you expect from a company like Brembo! The partnership between the brakes and front forks works like the perfect marriage with such a progressive feel.

KTM's 250F really is an enjoyable bike to ride and I was conscious of the big ***-eating grin I was wearing inside my lid.



Capacity: 449.3cc
Bore and stroke: 97mm x 60.8mm
Transmission: Four-speed
Carburettor: Keihin MX FCR41
Front suspension: WP USD 48mm (300mm travel)
Rear suspension: WP PDS (335mm travel)
Front brake: 260mm disc
Rear brake: 220mm disc
Wheelbase: 1475mm
Seat height: 925mm
Dry weight: 104kg
Price: £5295



450 SX-F

The 450 is the bike that KTM have worked hardest on this year with a complete new chassis and motor and you'll be pleased to know that it's the first 450 MX bike out of the crate that comes with an electric start. The 450s have been a bike that I've hated stalling halfway through a session as restarting them has caused problems for many people over the last few years – especially me with my silly little legs.

The electric start works really well and it didn't miss a beat all day. During the test not one bike suffered a flat battery which is a great thing because a hot 450 is not something you want to be kicking over in the middle of a race. I did lay the bike on its side for about a minute to see how effective the electric boot was and I don't think my finger was on the button for longer than two seconds before it fired back into life.

The 450 is a man's bike and as the track we tested at is really stony I was dreading the prospect of fighting to keep the rear end under control. It took a few laps of waiting for the rear end to break free from underneath me before I realised it wasn't going to! All this bike wanted to do was track and the rear end worked great with the front coming out of turns – wherever I pointed the front the rear helped to make easy work of it.

The riding position feels very similar to the 250 – KTM have been running Renthal bars for the last few years now which is a great touch. Even the bend felt spot on for me.

The front forks have a really nice feel to them – there's no stiff part to the stroke, just a very progressive feel – although there were a couple of times when I thought I'd bottomed them out as I felt I was using most of the travel. The WPs worked so good coming into the turns, not once did it feel like the front wheel want to break away from underneath me on this stony ground.

As with the rest of the range, the rear shock soaked up big landings with ease and hitting rough sections under load when coming out of turns felt comfortable with no need to come off the gas to let the bike straighten itself up.

This motor is well torquey with no real silly hard hitting punch from the bottom-end which made it so nice to ride and a lot of fun for a 450. I didn't find myself fighting with the bike to keep it under control thanks to the very progressive power. Okay, mid-range power was a bit more aggressive and had to be treated with respect but it was still very useable and the 450 certainly doesn't lack top-end power – there was more than enough for me.

125 EXC 2T

The tiddler of the group has undergone some changes for '07 and the guys at the factory have been working real hard to improve what I personally thought was the complete package.

The new cylinder design – completely reworked for improved power, cooling and lightness – makes this a legend in the motor department. Even with my large frame on board the motor pulled from zero in all situations. The bike has an easy feel and encouraged an attacking style.

The bike seems to transform to fit any terrain. On the motocross track and through the special test it ripped when ridden hard. The smooth, hard power delivery made me wonder if I had jumped onto the SX instead of the EXC. The power really is that strong.

This bike is a blast to ride and the balanced feeling between motor and chassis on the enduro lap was noticeable in all the areas of differing terrain. Lightness and comfort make the 125 a great all-round ride.

Capacity:	124.8cc
Bore and stroke:	54mm x 54.5mm
Transmission:	Six-speed
Carburettor:	Keihin PWK 36 S AG
Front suspension:	WP USD 48mm (300mm travel)
Rear suspension:	WP PDS (335mm travel)
Front brake:	260mm disc
Rear brake:	220mm disc
Wheelbase:	1471mm
Seat height:	925mm
Dry weight:	98.6kg
Price:	£4245

bike test



Capacity:	193cc
Bore and stroke:	64mm x 60mm
Transmission:	Six-speed
Carburettor:	Keihin PWK 36 S AG
Front suspension:	WP USD 48mm (300mm travel)
Rear suspension:	WP PDS (335mm travel)
Front brake:	260mm disc
Rear brake:	220mm disc
Wheelbase:	1471mm
Seat height:	925mm
Dry weight:	99.8kg
Price:	£4545



200 EXC 2T

In my book 200cc enduro bikes are generally legendary machines. They have that extra power and torque over a 125 and from a trail rider's point of view that extra *oomph* with no real added weight is a real bonus.

A few of the top hare and hounds racers use the 200 to do battle with 250 and 450 bikes here and in the States because of the agility and ease of ride. The '07 200 uses a Boyesen reed cage as well as a new 36mm Keihin PWK carb, giving it a new intake track which improves the powerband for even meatier grunt.

New settings in the suspension give a balanced feeling although – as with the 125 – the 200 is just a little under-sprung for my weight. But even so (and I am a meaty Irishman) the balance and ease of ride was still there with no major stresses on the trails and only a little bit of a soft feel on the motocross test.

The improvements to the 200 are all positive making this bike an even more formidable trail and race tool.

Capacity:	249cc
Bore and stroke:	66.4mm x 72mm
Transmission:	Five-speed
Carburettor:	Keihin PWK 36 S AG
Front suspension:	WP USD 48mm (300mm travel)
Rear suspension:	WP PDS (335mm travel)
Front brake:	260mm disc
Rear brake:	220mm disc
Wheelbase:	1475mm
Seat height:	925mm
Dry weight:	102.6kg
Price:	£4745



250 EXC 2T

Just like the 125, the 250 EXC comes with a completely new cylinder and head design with a new power valve unit. And there's a new V-Force reedvalve and the carb has new settings to work with the rest of the motor. These improvements are aimed at making the bike even more user-friendly in the woods and on the track.

The other new addition to the 250 and indeed all the two-stroke range is the switchable ignition that changes the ignition curve between a more rideable setting or a full-power version. Personally, I enjoyed the full-power version at the test venue as every part of the Austrian forest encouraged a 'have a go' attitude. The more rideable curve would be great on wet, hard going as the power is noticeably easier.

The 250 feels lighter and more agile than this year's model. I think this comes from the usability of the chassis and motor combination. The bike does nothing in an uncontrollable manner on all terrain types. The WP suspension felt smooth and came into its own on the rocks and roots.

**IN TIMES OF CHANGE..
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250 EXC-F

I've been looking forward to testing this machine since I heard KTM were going to release an EXC based on the SX-F motocross bike.

Let's face it, the 250 EXC needed a revamp. There was nothing wrong with the 250 EXC of the past few years if you were going trail riding but if you wanted a racer the old bike was just a little bit heavy and under-powered to cover the entire spectrum of riders from trail legend to pro racer... So the time is right for the arrival of the new 250 and the designers have been working and testing with the top guys in the WEC to develop this bike into a winner.

Pretty much everything is new and improved as the 250 is the 'special' launch for the entire '07 EXC range and it looks superb. When I got my hands on the two-fiddy I immediately felt comfortable when I threw my leg over the seat. I ran the handlebar clamps in the forward position and set the Renthal Fat Bars into an in-line position with the angle of the forks. This felt comfortable when the levers were set level.

The feel from the Brembo levers is chunky and positive and I really like this. The front brake felt spongy while sitting there but the progressive feel from the front brake was good out on the trails. The Brembo clutch master cylinder is beefed up and worked perfectly. With the cockpit sorted it was time to feel the bike on the track.

The balance and handling on the bike immediately took me into a comfort zone on the motocross test as well as the tight and technical enduro lap. I find it pretty amazing these days that bikes can be made to be this good from stock.

Bikes used to take a good few days to get used to but I find myself

Capacity:	249.5cc
Bore and stroke:	76mm x 55mm
Transmission:	Six-speed
Carburettor:	Keihin MX FCR39
Front suspension:	WP USD 48mm (300mm travel)
Rear suspension:	WP PDS (335mm travel)
Front brake:	260mm disc
Rear brake:	220mm disc
Wheelbase:	1475mm
Seat height:	925mm
Dry weight:	107.2kg
Price:	£5445

bike test



feeling comfortable enough – and confident enough – to push pretty hard after just a lap of a track now.

The 250 EXC-F is definitely one of these comfort bikes and within minutes I was getting great feedback from all the relative departments of the bike. The balance from the front of the chassis to the rear was central and positive in all situations except for downhill braking zones. The rear brake had a grabbing feel which would transfer through the rear suspension and unsettle the bike. This was a consistent trait and is pretty much the only negative feedback I received during my time on the bike.

Handling while under power and at speed was solid and predictable with only a slight softness in the forks caused by my weight and the challenge from HRH Jonty Edmonds to keep it fully tapped over the uphill ski jumps...you've just gotta love peer group pressure!

The motor is a silent animal. The power to noise ratio is great for the environment while test times would still be reduced over the previous models. The motor is deceptively fast with such a smooth power delivery that keeps on revving and takes you along at a serious speed. There was never a feeling of searching for more power or being in the wrong gear.

The six-speed box has been specifically developed for the enduro market while the quiet pipe doesn't seem too restrictive as the bike runs with a double dimensional header pipe and the design of the tailpipe makes for a greater volume to keep the noise down without a loss of power. This bike really is seriously quiet.

Overall the bike felt light and really easy to ride. The weight distribution keeps the balance and handling at a high level and the motor rips from every turn and obstacle that nature can chuck in its direction.



Capacity:	293.2cc
Bore and stroke:	72mm x 72mm
Transmission:	Five-speed
Carburettor:	Keihin PWK 36 S AG
Front suspension:	WP USD 48mm (300mm travel)
Rear suspension:	WP PDS (335mm travel)
Front brake:	260mm disc
Rear brake:	220mm disc
Wheelbase:	1475mm
Seat height:	925mm
Dry weight:	102.6kg
Price:	£4795

300 EXC 2T

The 300 EXC two-stroke rocks...simple. Leave it at that shall we?

Okay, better write a bit more. The daddy of the KTM two-stroke EXC range is a monumental machine and, like the rest of the range, the attention to detail and build quality is improving by the year.

The 300 was born for competition but it's also a serious fun tool on the open trails for every level of rider. The light and smooth feel to the bike – coupled with the very natural and comfortable seating and standing position on the bike – makes it a comfortable trail bike as well as a ripping racer.

The motor pulls from what seems like sub low end of the power and keeps on truckin' in a smooth, controllable way all the way to a nice over-rev. All you have to do with this bike is to climb on board and enjoy the ride.

The engineers at KTM have also designed an electric starter system and the '07 300 EXC-E will be available in December. A leccy start two-smoker...legendary!





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400 EXC

The 400 hasn't changed much from last year. The motor is tried and tested and with the proven reliability and all-round smooth feel you get from the 400 no change is a good thing.

The bike is a pleasure to ride and although it feels pretty heavy to chuck around, when it's being ridden smooth and under control it's at its best. Like every bike in the range the controls in the cockpit feel comfortable and the standing position is comfortable for longer rides.

Obviously, it's packing a few more pounds than the two-smoker EXCs and the 250 EXC-F which makes it a little less agile when you're threading it through trees but in the right hands on WFO fire trails this puppy will haul!

Capacity:	398.2cc
Bore and stroke:	89mm x 64mm
Transmission:	Six-speed
Carburettor:	Keihin MX FCR39
Front suspension:	WP USD 48mm (300mm travel)
Rear suspension:	WP PDS (335mm travel)
Front brake:	260mm disc
Rear brake:	220mm disc
Wheelbase:	1481mm
Seat height:	925mm
Dry weight:	113.5kg
Price:	£5445



Capacity:	447.92cc
Bore and stroke:	89mm x 72mm
Transmission:	Six-speed
Carburettor:	Keihin MX FCR39
Front suspension:	WP USD 48mm (300mm travel)
Rear suspension:	WP PDS (335mm travel)
Front brake:	260mm disc
Rear brake:	220mm disc
Wheelbase:	1481mm
Seat height:	925mm
Dry weight:	113.5kg
Price:	£5545



450 EXC

This is a great bike but is probably my least favourite of the range. The extra few ccs seem to turn the bike into a slightly strange handling bike. There just seemed to be a slight imbalance through the bike as it came across as a little bit too snappy in the power delivery making for a few uncomfortable moments.

The motor delivers great power but it delivers it in a bit of a hit. This causes no problem on the fast flowing sections but is a bit of a handful in the tight stuff.

Capacity:	510.4cc
Bore and stroke:	95mm x 72mm
Transmission:	Six-speed
Carburettor:	Keihin MX FCR39
Front suspension:	WP USD 48mm (300mm travel)
Rear suspension:	WP PDS (335mm travel)
Front brake:	260mm disc
Rear brake:	220mm disc
Wheelbase:	1481mm
Seat height:	925mm
Dry weight:	113.8kg
Price:	£5645



525 EXC

This chassis is made for the 525 – the smoothness delivered from this motor transfers through the chassis in a silky fashion and encourages you to crack right on.

I think this is what four-strokes are all about – a big-bore non-aggressive motor with a weighty feel which gives you pleasure when ridden well. There really is no substitute for capacity when you get to the 525 – it's a mega blend of 'man' power and a balanced chassis.

Absolutely fan-freakin'-tastic!

WALKER'S WORLD

Tip-top prep with our tip-top tech!

Words by Geoff Walker Photos by Alex Hodgkinson

SSSHUT IT!

Noise is in danger of killing the sport we all love but with a little common sense we can all keep it down a bit. In the first of a two-part special, Geoff takes a look at the role noise testing plays...



HERE IS a cold, hard fact – noise is killing our right to enjoy the sport we all love. With more tracks coming under the scrutiny of tree huggers and local authorities we really are getting ourselves in the brown, smelly stuff.

The problem we all face is partly to do with the four-stroke revolution. The irony is that four-poppers have made a comeback because their lower emissions are better for the environment – but the way the noise of a four-stroke carries (ie further) is seen as environmentally unfriendly. And it's also a lot more noticeable.

Now I'm not on an anti four-stroke trip but something has to be done to prevent the noise factor becoming even more of an issue.

The manufacturers have taken a step in the right direction this year to get the European bikes down to 96db from 98db. This is a good move but there are so many imported bikes from the other side of the Atlantic here in the UK and most of these are still fitted with a 98db silencer. This noise measurement is taken from a very low rev (4500rpm on a 450 and 5000rpm on a 250 thumper) but the real problem occurs when the puppies are at full rip.

This level must be reduced much further to keep our sport from going downhill. The aftermarket pipe manufacturers will work to this tolerance at the test level but as soon as the bike is at speed the noise seems unrestricted.

If you go to any practice track in the UK you are likely to get your eardrums thoroughly punished by a four-stroke which has burnt its packing and would probably test at around 110db. This is unacceptable and at some tracks there is an 'enduro only' ruling in force where only 94db pipes are allowed. This makes a massive difference and if everyone has to run a

GOT A BIKE PREP PROBLEM?

For the Walker way around it write to Geoff c/o dbr at the usual address or email him at Geoffwalkerdb@gmail.com

Each month's ☆ star letter will receive a bunch of Surfing Life swag. If you fancy some Surfing Life stuff as worn by the likes of Carl Nunn, Paul Edmondson and Tommy Church but didn't manage to write the star letter then check out their website at www.surfinglifestore.com



Testing Times

How it works...

The static noise test, as taken at pretty much all race meetings these days, requires a few pieces of equipment.

- A noise meter, which must be calibrated regularly
- An RPM reader
- The correct length and angle measure to keep a consistent 45° angle and 60cm distance to hold the noise meter in position while taking the reading
- Two human beings and a quiet bit of open space

The test rpm levels for each class bike in MX are...

- 450F 4500rpm
- 250F 5000rpm
- Two-stroke 7000rpm
- 85cc two-stroke 8000rpm

The process for the test is dead simple.

1 Start and warm the bike up.
2 Human #1 will then place the RPM reader on the motor and find the correct RPM for the type of bike being tested. There are digital readers and mechanical readers. The digital readers affix to the HT lead and the mechanical reader works on a vibrating metal protrusion which stops vibrating at the correct rev limit.

3 Human #2 will be standing at 45° to the outside of the rear of the bike, holding the noise meter at a distance of 60cm on a level plane from the height of the silencer.

4 When the correct RPM is reached human #1 will signal to human #2 who will take the reading and proceed to give you the good or, indeed, bad news.

quiet pipe then there is no performance disadvantage for that day at that track.

The noise problem is being recognized at the very top level and every effort is being made to manage the noise problem at GP and Brit championship level. I caught up with the noise test crew last month to see just what steps are being taken to keep the problem under control...

Here in the UK we have a good bunch of guys who carry out testing at all the national events. These guys do a great job even if a couple of them are past their sell-by date!

Andy Summers has been around the world of MX for ever (he was responsible for putting the two bikes through technical control before they went onto the Ark). I had many run-ins with him and the noise test team in my days on the spanners – especially at the UK Supercross series where I used to make some naughty tail pipes for the Kawis...

The FIM have been so impressed by the efforts to control noise levels here in the UK that they have given Andy a place on the team that travels to the GPs to oversee the noise testing and take noise readings...

I caught up with Andy to hear what he had to say about the noise issue in the sport.

DBR: How did you get this gig with the FIM?

AS: "The FIM approached me about the noise testing for '06 and, of course, I accepted."

DBR: Overall, what are your thoughts on the noise problems that have arrived with the four-stroke revolution?

AS: "The noise from the four-stroke bikes at test level is less than that of a two-stroke of a few years ago at world level but with the



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four-stroke the noise does tend to travel a bit further. We are working really hard to get these levels down with what we call 'dynamic testing' – this is a noise test carried out around the track where the bikes are coming under full power."

DBR: That sounds like a crackin' plan. Can you see and hear an improvement on the track?

AS: "Definitely and the proof is in the readings. The dynamic tests last year with the 98db static test level pipes fitted on a 250F were an ear bending 114db and with all the hard work that the teams and pipe manufacturers are putting in that level is now a more acceptable 106db on the dynamic testing."

DBR: How does that level compare to, say, an absolutely stock 250F?

AS: "A standard bike with stock 96db silencer

from new will test around 103db on the track."

DBR: That sounds like it is all going in the right direction.

AS: "I think that within the next couple of years the noise level will become more acceptable and that is a good thing for the sport."

So there it is, the guys at the very top level of the sport are making an effort to keep the noise in check. I realise it's easier for the big teams to keep the noise level under control as they all have pipe sponsors who will recondition and re-pack the pipes to keep the levels correct but we all have a responsibility to make sure our bikes are running with correctly packed exhausts.

The packing in a four-stroke silencer can burn out in well under 10 hours and this is where the problem occurs. The noise difference

between a newly packed silencer and an empty burnt out one is massive. As well as making a hideous amount of noise, the burnt out silencer will cause a power loss in your motor and ultimately lead to excessive wear in the engine department.

It really is important to try to get this noise issue under control and I personally think that with a little less noise on the tracks of the UK we should all get to enjoy ourselves without any grief. Who knows, we could maybe even start to get something positive going with some of the local authorities who seem to listen to the do-gooders and generally fail to listen to our side of the issue?

Look out next month for a step-by-step walk-through on the dos and don'ts of silencer packing and a list of types of quiet level silencers available on the market for your precious metal...



Walker's Big Banger

Flood defences

I got this top tip in from Mickey Mongioli recently – it's more a battlefield tip than a workshop tip but it's still worthy of publication...

"Instead of spending lots of time – and energy – trying to kick over your flooded two-stroker just lay it down on the floor for about five seconds. The fuel will exit the carb through the overflow pipes which will 'unflood' it making her easier to start up again."

So there you have it – sound advice for all you crash-happy two-popper pilots out there. For a chance to win a Big Bang Hour Meter of your very own email your top tech tips to me at geoffwalkerdb@aol.com or post 'em off to **Big Banger Top Tech Tips, DBR, 12 Victoria Street, Morecambe, Lancs LA4 4AG.** Failing that you can buy one by giving Baseline a bell on **01306 889911**.



An insufficiently-tightened torcycle and injury to the

ft-lb
(87 in-lb)
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HONDA	XR250	01-03	X3 FROM £2299	KAWASAKI	KDX 220	2003	£2299	SUZUKI	RM 250	02-05	X5 FROM £1999	YAMAHA	WR 450F	2004	X2 FROM £2999



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FRIDAY AFTERNOON AT THE BASIN...

WHAT DO WE DO FIRST?

OKAY BOYS, THERE'LL BE NO CAKES OR SWEETS THIS WEEKEND.

AND NO GETTING PI£#£d IN PUB.

WATCH OUT FOR GROUPIES.

I WANT NO SEX TONIGHT!

PTS

HAVE YOU GOT ANY SECRET TIPS, BOSS?

HARDY'S HOT SET-UPS.

PUT COTTON WOOL IN YOUR UNDIES...

AND BAND-AIDS ON YOUR THROTTLE THUMBS...

I'VE ALSO CLEVERLY BROUGHT ALONG A NEW SPARK-PLUG FOR EACH OF YOU.

59P EACH

MADE IN CHINA

BUT WHAT ABOUT TEAM TACTICS?

YES, I HAVE MADE A PLAN. WE WILL GO OUT AND WIN.

HOW!?

FIRST UP, WE GET ALL OF THE HOLESOTS.

THEN... WE KEEP THE 125s THROTTLE FULLY PINNED.

YOWL!

THE 450F IS SIMPLY NEVER BACKED OFF.

RAPP!

THUNDER!

...AND THE 650F? JUST HOLD IT WIDE OPEN.

THE TEAM WITH THE MOST THROTTLE WINS.

BUT WHAT ABOUT THE A-TEAMS?

NOT A PROBLEM. I MADE A PLAN FOR THEM TOO.

WE STICK IT RIGHT UP THE KIWIS.

WE MAKE THE BELGIANS EAT DIRT...

...AND LET THE FRENCH HAVE CAKE.

THEN WE'LL WIPE THE FLOOR WITH THOSE YANKS.

BIKE WASH

FOOL-PROOF PLANS ARE JUST GOOD MANAGEMENT...

...HEY... SMOOTH SHIFTER...

THAT'S THE BRAKE.



After a poor opening lap Dougie Lampkin fired himself to the top of the podium

SECOND HELPINGS!

Last year saw the homecoming of world trials to the UK - this year the planet's best pilots are back for more at Hawkstone Park

Photos by Suttty and Eric Kitchen

WORLD TRIALS is coming home again with the global series stopping off on its continent-hopping tour in Britain over the weekend of July 29/30.

Far from being restricted to just hardcore trials fans, the modern version of this specialised sport now has widespread appeal. With only a very remote chance of a British MX world champion this year, why not do your bit for queen and country by supporting a true British sporting hero in the form of Dougie Lampkin as he attempts to bring an incredible eighth world outdoor trials title back to these shores?

The words 'Hawkstone Park' are enough to provoke a flood of memories both old and new about the many epic events that have been hosted at this famous venue over the last half century or so. The most recent of those encounters worthy of the 'epic' status saw 8,000 passionate British fans fill the sandy Shropshire hillside not for a motocross meeting but for a round of the '05 FIM world trials championship.

Starved of a world round for four long years, the series returned to the UK mainland during the final weekend of July last year with a homecoming reception any sport would have

been proud of. It was a day when the atmosphere was electric right from the first rider setting off through to the final punchcard being stamped. Dougie Lampkin's dramatic second lap performance to snatch victory in the final section added the icing to the cake and ensured that this would be a day that those who were lucky enough to be present for would remember for the rest of their lives.

Planning for the second homecoming started literally the day after last year's highly successful venture finished so organisers L+M Events are confident that they have everything in place to deliver an even bigger and better weekend of world class action this time around. Chief course planner Martin Lampkin (the L in L+M Events) has been hard at work with his team to find four completely new sections to add to the revised hazards that ticked the box both in terms of crowd entertainment and in challenging the riders' skills to the absolute limit the first time around.

With the public very much in mind the course will be even more compact than last year to offer spectators increased access with no section now being more than 150 metres away from the factory paddock area which itself will again house two man-made type

Shaun Morris takes a five in '05 - and, yes, it really is that steep!



Spaniard Toni Bou has proved to be the rising star in '06



Timetable

Saturday

09.30-11.00	Technical control for world championship riders
10.30-11.00	Autograph session for world championship riders
11.00-13.00	Official practice for world championship riders
13.00-13.30	Steve Colley demonstration
13.30-14.30	Masters Mini-Trial
14.30-18.00	Section inspection for world championship riders
15.00-15.30	Steve Colley demonstration

Sunday

9.00	Trial starts – first youth rider
11.00	Trial starts – last world championship rider
12.30	Finish first lap – first rider
14.30	Finish first lap – last world championship rider
14.30	Trial finish – first rider
16.30	Trial finish – last world championship rider
17.00	Prize ceremony

• Please note that there will be no access to the venue, other than to the public campsite area for overnight camping, prior to Saturday 29th July.

After winning last year part of Dougie's prize was getting to meet Jack Burnicle



James Dabill is hoping to grab a top-five finish at his home world round



hazards. A total of six sections will be packed into the main 'bowl' and these will benefit from a specially installed PA system that will be used to keep the fans right up-to-date with scores from around the rest of the trial without moving from their chosen vantage points.

Eurosport's Jack Burnicle will head up a commentary team that will include ex-world rider Steve Colley and ex-world championship minder Woody Hole who will all have up-to-the-minute information to hand thanks to a new electronic scoring system that will be making its world debut at Hawkstone Park. As each rider exits a section, their running result will be uploaded to a web page that can be accessed by anyone at the trial who either has an internet enabled phone or PDA device.

In the main world class Dougie Lampkin will share the home support with reigning world junior champion James Dabill who made his last appearance in this supporting category at Hawkstone Park last year and did so in style by

signing off with an emphatic home win. As DBR went to press Dougie was second in the championship table, 12 points adrift of Adam Raga while Dabill currently sits in the top 10 overall standings in his first full season at the top level. A seventh place at the second round in Portugal is James' best showing so far so he will be looking to his home GP to break into that exclusive top five that many in the paddock feel he is worthy of joining.

Dabill's team-mate Michael Brown has picked up the mantle in the junior championship and has really upset the form book by giving the far more fancied Spanish riders Daniel Oliveras and Daniel Gibert a real run for their money. Brown had led the series since his shock victory at the opening GP in Spain but inconsistent performances in Japan and France have seen him slip back to second spot in the points table. Home soil should really help the pint-sized hero from Scarborough to get his campaign back on course. Brown's light frame

is ideally suited to the steep climbs so he will settle for nothing less than top of the podium in front of his British fans.

The 125 class – or youth championship – was introduced last year to recruit new talent to the series that should eventually shift through the ranks to the highest level with a real hope of developing a future world champion from within. Spain has dominated this end of the sport for the last decade but their current crop of new riders has been over-shadowed by Britain's incredible strength in depth in a category that is limited in age from 16 to 18 years old.

Alexz Wigg will lead the home assault having briefly topped the standings before missing a round due to school exams. Wigg's title challenge is far from over as only the best 10 out of the 12 competition days count toward the final tally in this class so his rivals will have rounds to drop later in the series. While Wigg will be looking to get his hands on the winner's

champagne, glory is not a given as he is sure to be pushed all the way by an on-form Ross Danby who has been on the podium at the last two rounds plus Sam Haslam and Lee Sampson who are both potential winners or at least rostrum fillers if they ride well on the day.

The trial itself takes place on Sunday but there are two great days of entertainment on offer with Saturday having a packed programme all of its own. A morning autograph session with the top riders leads straight into the only official practice session of the weekend. The two hours of training is not to be missed as it is a great opportunity to see the riders up close and in a relaxed frame of mind compared to the pressure they will be under the day after.

Steve 'Showtime' Colley has two mind-blowing demonstrations planned when the

flamboyant Manxman will put on an unmatched display of extreme trials riding.

Saturday's jewel however will be the Mini Masters trial that includes no less than two ex-world champions in its selected entry list. With seven world titles to his name Jordi Tarres is a true trials legend but his past achievements will be of little interest to his rivals with whom he will be reunited in a trial that will take place over a reduced course using a conducted format. Fellow ex-champ Marc Colomer and crowd favourite Amos Bilbao complete the Spanish trio that will take on the Italian maestro Donato Miglio plus 10-time British champion Steve Saunders and, hopefully, ex-vice champion Diego Bosis in this truly unique event.

Adding weight to an already packed weekend, Gas Gas will launch their 2007 trials

range at Hawkstone Park and will be joined by Beta, Sherco, Montesa and Scorpa in the trade village along with the country's top trials dealers and distributors to make it the biggest trials exhibition of its kind in the UK. With on-site camping available from Friday night and advanced discounted tickets on sale until July 21 (standard priced tickets/camping available on the gate) what are you waiting for?

The event will be AA signed (yellow/black signage) from the A49 and the A53. Hawkstone Park MX Circuit is centrally located in the UK, just off the A49 near to the village of Hopton. The exit off the A49 can be found between B5065 and B5063 and is signposted 'Booley/Stanton'. For sat-nav purposes the venue postcode is SY4 4NA.

For further info/bookings please call 0161 705 2075 or visit www.ukworldtrial.com

Defending champ Adam Raga is the man to beat



Albert Cabestany is looking to put his Sherco on the podium

Former world champ Takahisa Fujinami is always popular with the fans



special feature

*I think, therefore I am...
Josh Coppins is one of the
few GP stars who takes
mental training seriously*



MIND GAMES

We all know that GP MX requires almost super-human physical fitness but why, at a time when sports psychology is having a huge impact in other sporting fields, are world championship stars neglecting their mental fitness?

Words by Adam Wheeler Photos by Suttu

WHEN A golfer misses an easy putt, a tennis player serves a double fault in the final set or a motocrosser fluffs his start or makes a big mistake on the last lap the relevance of psychology in the sporting arena could not be more apparent.

It's obvious that to compete at the highest level riders need to be in prime physical condition – but what about prime mental condition? Why are psychologists an accepted part of many sports but are non-existent in the motocross paddock? Mental training has been scientifically proven to aid sporting performance in a number of disciplines, from football to golf to athletics to bobsleigh – yet hardly anyone inside the world championship is seeking to improve this factor of their competitive output.

"I really don't know why more people aren't using mental training in motocross," reckons Josh Coppins' trainer Stephan Nusser. "The brain is the origin of every movement and exercise we make and that means if you have a clear picture in your head of the activity or sport you want to perform the information transfer from your brain to the muscles is much better or easier. It facilitates movements automatically.

"This could be especially useful at the start in motocross because you don't have time to think like when you open the throttle, shift gear or start to brake during a race. In certain sections of the track the rider does not have many options and therefore must know in his mind what he wants and what he must do. Riders are already doing a lot of mental work during a race but if they prepared beforehand it would make a big difference.

"At the moment in motocross we are not at the stage where the riders see the point in doing mental training. We are not as professional as we should be in this area."

Yves Demeulemeester – personal trainer to Tyla Rattray, Kevin Strijbos, Joel Smets and formerly Mickael Pichon – agrees. "There is a lot of work to be done with mental training and in this field motocross is far behind. Athletes need to know how they can perform in a situation because sometimes they won't really know themselves. They need to know how they function.

"People have to persevere for a long time to be physically strong and it is the same with mental training. You can't be mentally 'fit' by doing one session and it is not easy to see a progression. After some exercises in the gym you will know if you are getting something out of it the day afterwards! With the mental techniques you might not be quite sure if it works and it could take years."

"Motocross is really complex so it is even more important than other sports to mentally prepare," adds Nusser. "Take golf for example. It seems easy because it is one basic movement but so much effort is placed mentally into improving the ability to swing. To make a putt of two metres is normally not a problem for a pro but it is the tension and pressure of the

competition that makes it difficult. That can be applied also to a race when you have 29 riders behind you. The technical abilities needed for motocross are very complex between balance, co-ordination and judgement."

Yet there is no escaping the fact that motocross is chiefly an endurance sport and with many countless hours practising and the number of races easily totting up to 40 each year perhaps the need for that extra mental 'edge' is diminished in comparison to other sports.

"The more I train and I stick to a regime then the stronger I feel mentally," says factory KTM rider Tyla Rattray. "Training has the double effect of making you fitter both mentally and physically. You absolutely have to train and work hard to ride fast at the grand prix.

"We are always training and riding, riding and training and our sport is one that lasts over an hour-and-a-half on race day so maybe we are mentally more prepared than a sprinter who goes for 10 seconds."

Rattray's team-mate in MX1 Jonathan Barragan agrees on the positive mental effects gained from physical work. "Hard training means that you are confident in what you can do on a Sunday," he says. "Of course a crash or a bad time on the track can set you back a little mentally but knowing that you have pushed hard, you have a bike that is more or less working to your liking and that you have a good team behind you can make the difference."

"Your mind should not dictate the body, it should be the other way around," believes Martin Honda rider and former British champion Brian Jorgensen. "You become fit and healthy and then build up the mental side from this base. If you are only strong in the mind then you can be training and the body can't follow."

MX is by nature a dangerous activity and low moments through injury, loss of form and an often unbalanced risk to reward ratio means that racers probably experience the extremities of the emotional spectrum more than other athletes.

Being able to come through the bad times is another form of mental reinforcement. Luckless with injury and fresh from a bad season with the factory Yamaha in 2005, Jorgensen knows this more than most. "I have had a lot of injuries and some bad luck and you do find yourself being philosophical about it and learning how much psychology is important to dealing with the problems you have, thinking positive and accepting things."

Yet the weight of scientific evidence still points towards the fact that regardless of the perfect physical condition and motivational past experiences, mental training can elevate performance to a higher plain.

"I think there is a definite need for it in motocross but the riders just don't see it," says Nusser. "Mental training isn't only important for cognitive skills but it can help to put you on the right 'active' level. If you are too nervous,



Jonathan Barragan feels if you get the physical side right the mental side will follow – it's an attitude shared by Brian Jorgensen (top far right)

like many riders are in certain circumstances, then the techniques can help calm the state of arousal during the race or qualification which can aid performance.

"Relaxation can involve methods like 'active muscle relaxation' which means tensing a muscle or muscle group and really concentrating on the release of the tension, working through the body and groups activating and relaxing specific parts. The breathing is important using long exhalations to soothe the whole nerve system. Basically things that can help calm you down."

One of the generally accepted theories in sport psychology refers to the 'Inverted U'. Arousal (getting psyched up or excited) climbs, say, before the start of a race and can assist sporting performance but only to a peak before too much has a reduced effect and the performance dips. Some motocrossers may be getting a little too wound-up in the waiting zone

or during a race while others may need a jolt to raise their level. Whether trying to calm the adrenaline or get more pumped, this is where mental training can help with any shortfalls.

"Being a professional sportsman is about finding a balance," reckons Jorgensen. "Not being too anxious and not being too chilled out when you have to perform. It is not as easy as it sounds. I think your personal state is always linked to how much fun you are having. To have things going well makes you relaxed. The first mistake is to put a lot of pressure on yourself and I have done this a lot in the past."

From its effects on confidence, esteem, arousal, stress and relaxation, the whole dissection of the psyche and the role it can play in sport is a huge topic. It's the current hot issue in sport science and specialists are eager to see what boundaries can be reached.

The scant techniques used in motocross by the majority are uncoordinated but that is not to

say that the merits of preparing mentally are not completely lost after all, as Jorgensen points out, "if you can't concentrate then you are down".

"Walking the track maybe is like unconscious mental training," says Rattray. "Everyone always has an opinion about the best lines. There is a lot of strategy involved. I have heard a lot of people in South Africa say that we just sit on the bike and twist the throttle. As well as our heart-rates beating at 180-190 for 40 minutes – you have to sprint to get that high – there is also an unbelievable amount of concentration. Each lap can present a different situation. I try to focus on the track because one slip of concentration means a crash. Leading a GP at the front can feel like double the race time."

"Walking a track can help but it is nowhere near the full extent," says Nusser. "It's not like sitting in your motorhome, really concentrating and doing a lap in your head. In theory, with a

well-honed technique, there should not be a great difference between what you have done in your head and what can be done on the track."

Visualisation of a skill or situation is a common method but needs to be correctly applied. "I wouldn't say I use visualisation but in the waiting zone all I am thinking about is the start," continues Rattray. "When I am in or around the gate I am completely focussed on my procedure. It is one of the most important parts of the race. I am not the kind of guy who will sit at home on the sofa and think about my starts. I will go through a race sometimes but I think it is more to do with reactions in the moment. In athletics you hear the gun and in motocross you just wait for the gate to move."

"Visualisation helps," reckons Nusser. "There have been many studies and it is proven. It is about automatism of the skill or movement you want to perform. You can never do too much."

"I have done some visualisation before and I have found it useful but it does depend on the situation and how you feel," says Jorgensen. "You could be nervous or tense and it doesn't have the same effect. I think it is like a drill you have to learn."

Keeping open-minded about the possibilities of mental training is essential in the hope of seeing noteworthy results. Of course, it is an intensely personal project. British champion Carl Nunn is a believer in the potential of mental work but declined to talk about the subject.

"Josh is open-minded and is trying it," reveals Nusser. "We have already implemented some things into his training programme to increase his self-belief but this only works so far. I can't tell myself I am going to be world champion, for example, because after a while it will be obvious that I don't have the technical abilities but is useful if you don't have much self-belief."

So what exactly does it entail? "As with physical training you have to set yourself realistic goals," explains Nusser. "You must believe that mental training can help you and be prepared to sit down for 30 to 45 minutes and do your session. It sounds easy but it takes a lot out of you, more than going for a run for an hour. It has to be practised through the week and be part of the programme."

"We then use key words at the race and do a compact session that can be used before the start in the waiting zone and produce images that can be triggered to reduce tension."

It doesn't work for everyone though. "Guys can be difficult to motivate," says Demeulemeester. "An example last year was Joel Smets. A very competitive man but by the halfway point of the season he could not find the drive to push and go through the pain barrier. I think Pichon now is in the same situation and even Kevin Strijbos last season struggled to keep interested. The psychological state is so important."

Marc De Reuver used a psychologist for four seasons through a sustained spell of injuries before deciding that he wasn't reaping any benefits towards his performance. The Dutchman is still sceptical.

"He really talked into me and was telling me that I was the best! When I left his office I felt like Rocky – I was the king and could beat everybody! But when it came to the weekend and I was crap I questioned how much it was working."

"I don't think you can turn a backmarker into a GP winner with that stuff. He helped me when I was injured, feeling low and wanted to stop. I tried the mental side for four years but it did not



work for me. It was also really expensive!"

"It costs money and the teams don't think to have it as part of the set-up," Demeulemeester adds. "The teams also leave the conditioning up to the rider and include a clause in the contract to make sure they are fit so they remove a degree of responsibility. Some riders are too young and are not motivated enough or disciplined enough to follow what a mental trainer says. I think the teams need to have more responsibility towards the conditioning mentally and physically of the riders."

Nusser believes that further psychological investigation into motocross is inevitable. "I am confident that in a few years mental training will be more common in motocross, it just takes time. Once a peak is reached in the physical field – where the rider knows that he can't make more improvements – then they will start to look in other areas which is where the mental training, nutrition and detailed scrutiny of technique will be employed."

"Until the mid '90s there were no personal trainers and in 10 years time we might have a psychologists in the paddock – that is the next level for the sport."



Marc De Reuver used a psychologist when he was injured but – despite helping him to feel "like Rocky" – he's stopped his visits



FOOD FOR THOUGHT!

British
Championship

A chance encounter with a displaced Kent family sets Jack thinking about a British championship round at Canada Heights back in 1990

Words and photos by Jack Burnicle



ANSTIE LEADS BRITISH REIGNING CHAMPION KURT NICOLL EARLY IN RACE TWO.

was armed with his mum's Kodak Brownie camera. After art college he mixed life as a graphic designer, magazine art director, photographer and part-time art college tutor with motocross and photo-journalism. Now he's a commentator, painting pictures with words. He never did get a proper job...

JACK BURNICLE is the godfather (our words, not his) of British MX Journalism. Born in Billingham, County Durham, to Bella and nutty (his words, not ours) musical genius Stan Burnicle, Jack was mad about cars and motor racing as a kid. At sweet 16 he got a motorbike, rode it to a local 'scramble' and was instantly, hopelessly hooked. Next time he went he



DEFENDING CHAMP KURT NICOLL, BACK ON KTM, WAS OPENING ROUND OF 1990 AT CANADA HEIGHTS.

DESCRIPTION SIGNALEMENT

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Occupation	GRAPHIC DESIGNER	
Place of birth	BILLYINGHAM	
Date of birth	9/3/47	

Usual signature of beater

Signature du titulaire

Usual signature of wife

Jack Burnicle



250 TRIO MATT BATES
(KTM, 36) & BOB MEECH
& DAN WINT (HONDA)
SCRAP FOR SECOND -
RACE POINTS.



WORLD 500 CHAMPION
DAVE THORPE
DEBATED HIS WORKS
KAWASAKI VIGOROUSLY
BUT IN VAIN.

OLLIE FORD and her sons Chris and Graham have recently taken over one of my favourite local cafes. The family moved up from near Maidstone and they all talk like Mark Eastwood. "Ave you 'eard of Canader Oyts?" asked Chris the other day. Turns out they know Easty's beloved track because the brothers used to go and watch their mate Danny Veale competing there.

Danny is a leading light in the UK freestyle movement after his racing career ended the day he broke both wrists at Kent's premier British championship venue. Meehan's Ve Sidcup and DMCC seem to have kicked off the British Open series at Canada Heights, near Swanley, since the dawn of time. But in reality it was not always thus (and it wasn't this year either Jack - SL). They originally launched their annual pre-season national, cutely entitled the 'Early Birds', in 1983 but it wasn't until its eighth running that the Early Birds became the opening round of a British Open championship on Sunday, March 11th, 1990.

Mark Eastwood and his famous dad Vic had redesigned the already magnificent woodlands circuit in preparation for a momentous weekend and even back then secretary of the

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ROB HERRING (SUZUKI, 6)
SOARS SIDE-BY-SIDE
THROUGH THE TREES
WITH MARK BANKS
(KAWASAKI, 19)

meeting was the evergreen Marge Clarke! Extra lustre bathed proceedings with the news that world 500cc champion Dave Thorpe would debut his factory Kawasaki after ending a successful association with Honda that dated back to the year the Early Birds began.

Thorpe would take on his new team-mate Paul Malin, outgoing Kawasaki star and reigning Open champion Kurt Nicoll (freshly re-signed by KTM after three years at Team Green), fiery 500 GP warrior Mervyn Anstie and 250 shotguns Rob Herring and Jem Whatley. What a mouth-watering prospect for Sidcup's British Open premier!

Unfortunately, my own excitement and anticipation that beautiful spring morning was somewhat muted. Friday night's birthday celebrations had spilled recklessly over into Saturday. Sunday's throbbing hangover meant arriving late and still fragile, even though Canada Heights lay only 18 miles down the road from my gaff in Finsbury Park, north London! But the matriarchal Marge had mailed me a pass so instead of the customary queues I was able to cruise up a bewilderingly empty Button Lane.

So where was everybody?

The startling answer appeared as soon as I'd clambered the hill from my car. Canada Heights was carpeted with fans, packed around the wooded Kentish slopes and creating the atmosphere of a full-blown grand prix!

The club had only printed 8000 tickets. "We thought that would be more than enough," growled club official Jack Pringle. "We've never had a crowd like this before!"

The British championship format featured three Open class races. An uphill haul off the start usually favoured 500s but Yamaha's Julian Rawson disproved that theory and Nicoll had to work hard for his eventual lead with Herring powering impressively through in his wake on the Heron Suzuki. While Thorpe was forced downfield with a front tyre puncture, Malin murdered the field off a ghastly start, briefly snatching third place from Rawson on the final lap before Julian bored aggressively back inside the Kawasaki in a grandstand finish!

Nicoll, stuck in second gear for the last two laps when his clutch packed in, only just made it across the line to win, his KTM stopping completely between finishing line and pits! Kurt had enjoyed a relaxed run-in to the season down on his dad's new farm near Toulouse in the south of France where he had 70 acres and a two-minute, 20-second lap at his disposal but rode rubbish at the Beaucaire international. "I'm beginning to realise the pressure David is under," admitted the reigning champ. "I just got more and more wound up during the last two weeks."

Second moto saw Malin out with engine problems on the opening lap. Rob Herring inherited Maler's mantle as miracle man, hauling after a first-lap collision through a midfield humming with 250s as Matt Bates (KTM) fought off Warren Edwards (Yamaha) and Honda's duo of Weston Beach Race winners Ryan Hunt and Rob Meek.

Nicoll, early leader Anstie (500 Honda) and Thorpe had cleared off at the front, their tense confrontation thrilling the huge crowd. But Herring blew past everyone else into a fiery fourth spot ahead of 500cc trio Jared Smith, Brian Wheeler and Mark Eastwood and Yamaha's 'Bunny' Edwards and Jem Whatley.

Paul Malin went wire-to-wire for his maiden British Open title victory in race three, flicking the Kawasaki and its new motor around like a jet-propelled toy. "It was an engine I'd used before," explained the impressively mature teenager. "The whole thing is stock. That means we can get everything off the shelf. Each bit has a part number!"

The simplicity of this 'works' set-up must surely have appealed to Mark Banks, whose TK Landscapes Kawasaki was the ex-Nicoll factory monster from 1989. It munched a gearbox, a footrest and a fuel pipe that day, leaving 'Banker' with a solitary point for 15th in race three after replacing the fuel line!

Nicoll settled for second place in race three, rear shock problems emerging as the track cut up. Herring wanted to stiffen his rear suspension which had been bottoming out during his stupendous second race moto but the

adjuster was seized solid. Mechanic Ian Browne (Mark Banks' future brother-in-law and father of Elliott Banks-Browne) laid into it with a hammer and a few choice epithets without success.

"Never mind. It'll do!" reckoned Rob before storming past Thorpe to nail a strong second overall and reinforce his threat to become the first 250 rider to win a British Open title.

At least Thorpe was able to make an unaccustomed early departure for home. Sixth overall didn't merit an appearance on the podium. His dad Keith smiled philosophically. "Do you wanna know what happened in that last race?" he grimaced. "The locking nut on the rear shock came loose and allowed the spring to unwind. Mind you, this was our first day racing with Kawasaki."

It was also the first dynamic day that Canada Heights had entertained the big guns of the British Open championship. And they've been coming back for more (almost) ever since!



MALIN WEAVED
MAGIC TO SECURE
HIS MAIDEN BRITISH
OPEN RACE WIN.

MIKE ALESSI



Steve Cox is an American moto-journo who follows the entire AMA SX/MX tour. A staffer at famed US weekly Cycle News for over four years before striking out on his own to do the freelance thing, Steve's an ex-pro motocross racer so he can ride as well as write. He knows the sport and its personalities like few others and as our US Editor provides top-level insight and features fresh from the Stateside scene...



HOLEY MOSES!

Holeshot king Mike Alessi might just learn a thing or two by not leading so much...

WORDS and PHOTOS by Steve Cox

It's holeshots like this that have helped Mike Alessi set the pace in the AMA 250F division



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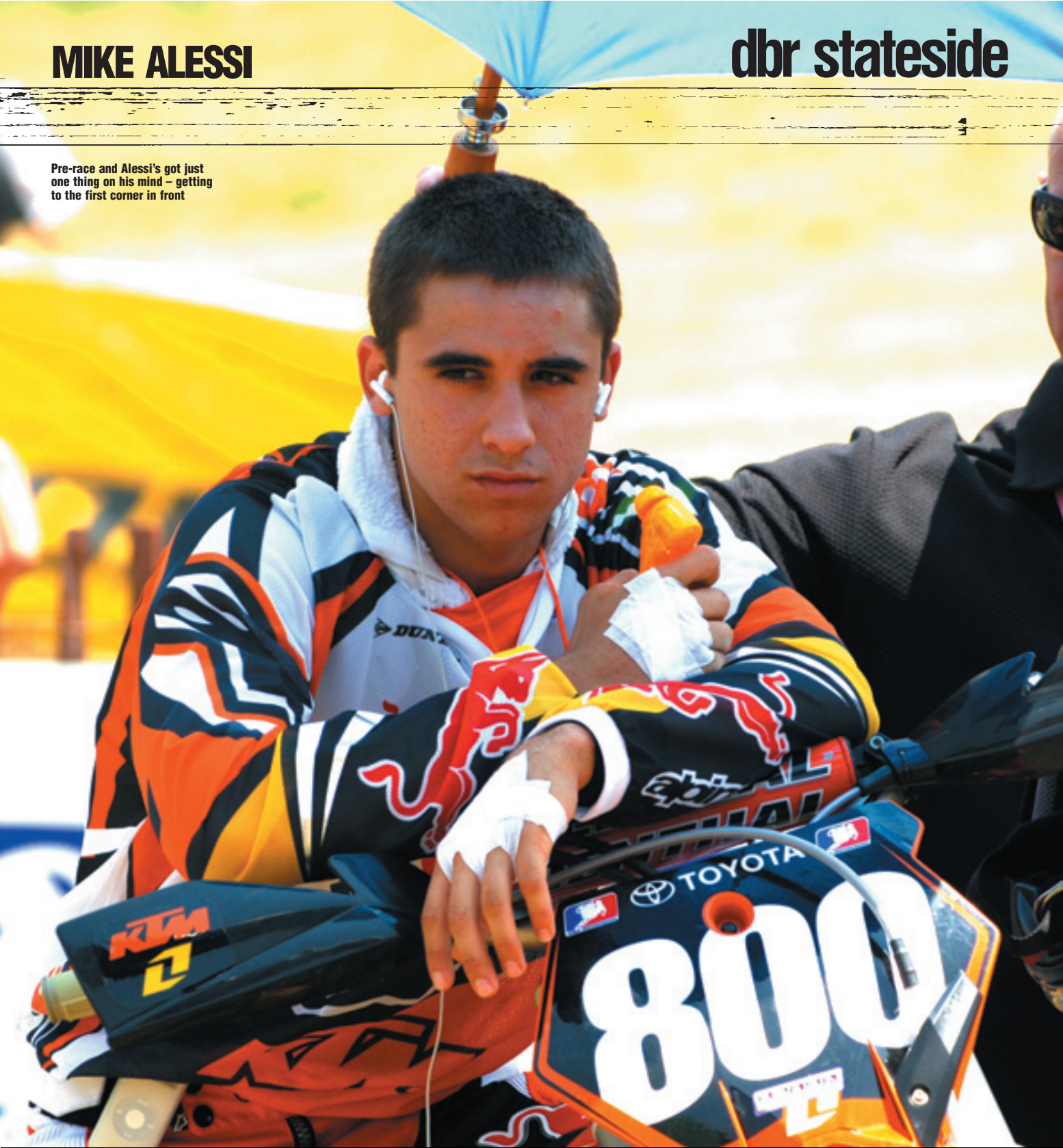


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Pre-race and Alessi's got just one thing on his mind – getting to the first corner in front



Mike Alessi could very well be the best starter in the entire world of MX. It seems he holeshots well over half of his races. When you consider that there are 39 other guys on the line every time, to be batting over 50 per cent is significant. His game is to get out front and get away from the pack to win. Unfortunately, lately the pack has been chasing him down.

Alessi is leading the 250F division Stateside but the others have caught his stride. So what now for Alessi?

DBR: What is it about the way that the Alessis approach racing that separates you from your competitors?

MA: "The way we approach things is that we work hard for sure. We study a lot and dissect our competition so that come the weekend we're ready for them. I have been watching lots of tapes from the '90s and the 2000s and just learning from different guys like that.

"I like watching their style and corner speed and look at my competition and figure out their weaknesses."

DBR: What's the secret to your starts?

MA: "Honestly, I don't even know. My starts have always been good since I was on 50s and 60s. It's just something I'm good at."

DBR: Since you've always gotten good starts, do you think it makes it harder for you to come through the pack since you aren't used to doing it?

MA: "Definitely. I'm definitely not used to coming from behind. I mean, very rarely do I have to come from behind. I fell in the first turn at Budds and came back from last to 11th before I fell on the last lap.

"I mean, I can come from behind but it's a lot easier just to be in the front at the start and just take off."

DBR: Then you have a clear track and can take whatever line you want...

MA: "Exactly, just riding your own race. Really, you set the pace for the race because when you're out front setting the pace you're holding the race."

DBR: Jeremy McGrath used to do that – holeshot, put in five or six blistering laps, then just relax to the finish.

MA: "That's everyone's plan, to get the start and check out really quick. Everyone's ideal plan. But you can't always get the holeshot because you can get bad starts. Being up at the front and trying to get the holeshot, that's the ideal goal. It seems like from third back they're pinned wide open and out of control and crazy the first couple laps.

"Even myself, when I'm in 10th or whatever, I'm going crazy trying to get to the front. It's weird because you

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can't even see the leaders even though you're in the top 10. They're way up there. It definitely helps to be up at the front."

DBR: Could you learn more from your competition if you weren't out front so much?

MA: "Sure, there are some days where guys are going to be better than me and they're definitely taking different lines that I should know about but I don't because I'm out front. Sometimes it's better to be behind, for sure, because you can get that guy's pace and use his lines and then toward the end you can kind of zap him."

DBR: Do you feel like sometimes other riders are listening closely to what you say in order to create more motivation to beat you?

MA: "I mean, definitely, what riders say other riders hear and read in magazines. Depending on what it says you could make them like you or it could go the other way where they don't like you because of what you said but I'm not a bad guy. I just go out there and try to get the holeshot and I'm just like every other racer, trying to win."

DBR: For example, at Budds Creek when Josh Grant got behind you he seemed to try harder to beat you because you're Mike Alessi, not just because you're another racer. Do you know what I'm saying?

MA: "Josh is a great racer and we came up through amateurs racing and battling but all of the riders out there want to push to pass the guy in front of them. Nobody ever wants to sit behind someone and get roasted for 35 minutes. But, I guess like you said, because it's me, Mike Alessi, everybody wants to try and push a little bit harder to try and pass so..."

DBR: How much do you pay attention to the 450 class?

MA: "It seems so weird that Carmichael and Bubba are so fast that by the end of the race they're like a minute in front of Chad Reed in third and he's another 30 seconds in front of fourth. It's not like that in our class. It's weird. It's hard to understand it. I think it's just that they're so much faster than everyone, it's that simple."

DBR: Could you do better than the other 450 riders?

MA: "Well, different bikes, I would say myself, Josh Grant and Villopoto would have something for him, for sure, for the first half of the race. I think Ricky's endurance is probably better than anybody's so... It would be a good race for sure. I bet it would be a good battle for the first half of the race."

DBR: If you get asked to go to the Motocross des Nations are you going?

MA: "I would go but I don't think Carmichael wants me to go. I think he wants it to be Villopoto, Carmichael and maybe Windham. I haven't talked to Carmichael personally but reading from Cycle News I know he wants Villopoto to go and I think the AMA board will pick him just because that's what Carmichael wants. It's fine with me. If he goes, he goes. If I go, I go. But he's only done the one race in Europe back on 80s. I know what it's like because I've raced there a bunch of times but it'll be different for him, for sure. At the end of the day, though, it's up to the AMA board and whatever they decide. But Carmichael, we already know his vote."

DBR: What would you consider a weakness?

MA: "I think one of my biggest problems is worrying about the other riders. When I'm out front there's nothing for me to do but watch the guys behind me. That's bad because I'm not focusing on the track and going forward. That's where I think your point of being behind guys can be better because you've got something to race towards and I think that's what the other guys do."

"I can only race my race and then the guys behind me can key off of me. I should be looking forward and racing the track but it's hard when you're out front in front of 20 or 30,000 people with 39 guys behind you that want to take your spot. But I'll just keep doing what I'm doing and try and keep getting points."





SAME OLD STORY!

In his final full year of racing Ricky Carmichael's out front and pulling away – just like he has for the last 10 seasons...

WORDS and PHOTOS by Steve Cox

Everything's going right – again – for Ricky Carmichael. In his last full season of racing motocross he's right where he's been over the last 10 seasons – with a comfortable lead in the championship before the halfway point of the series. Some things never change it seems.

Heading into Southwick Carmichael has raced the event nine times and won eight of them. Of course, he's never had to race James Stewart there. Stewart grabs the opening moto lead early on and Carmichael jumps in right behind him. Stewart seems to pull away for a few laps but then Carmichael quickly reels him in around the halfway point making a pass stick for the lead shortly after. From there it seems as if Carmichael's gone. Yet, only a few laps later, Stewart comes around in the lead with no sign of Carmichael.

James Stewart gets a little buck wild in an attempt to beat off Ricky Carmichael



"I actually fell down on the old finish line from back in the day when we used to park on the other side," says Carmichael. "What happened was I just got a good drive and my shock kind of blew through and it kicked me back and I high-sided. My bike was laying on the wrong side so I had to pick it up a hill and turn around and get it started. I lost all my steam at that point so there was no point in rushing it. It was just a stupid move."

Carmichael gets up just in front of third-placed Chad Reed and holds on for second while Stewart takes the win.

Moto two also sees Stewart jump into the early lead but this time Carmichael isn't going to wait patiently to make the pass. He makes his move at his first opportunity. "I wanted to be a little bit more aggressive. When I say

aggressive, I'm not trying to take anybody out but I needed to make a pass a bit earlier than I did. I was right there with him on the start and I drove it in on him a little bit in that second turn there and then I tried to drive it in on him in the next one because I feel like I'm getting caught up in his pace. I was just kind of looking for a place to pass and I was hanging back a little bit because I didn't feel like eating dirt like I did the first moto. When I got past him he wasn't cutting me no slack – he was diving in on me. I knew he would do that, I've just got to be careful and watch out a little bit.

"On this big sandy berm I had an awesome line there that second moto and then I just got a good drive off that thing. I didn't feel comfortable that second moto with my shock and dude I looked like Johnny O' at Daytona in

like '86 or something [jumping nose-high]. It was embarrassing. I felt like an idiot. I don't even want to see pictures of me this weekend. It was ugly. But I just had to get by him. I could see he was starting to labour a little bit and Davi was right on my tail."

From there Carmichael pulls away from Stewart in second, Millsaps in third and Reed in fourth. Reed eventually finds his way around Millsaps then on the last lap Stewart's bike suffers a mechanical failure sending him down on the ground in a heap. Stewart doesn't finish the moto although he is still credited with 11th as Carmichael laps up to 12th.

"I really enjoy riding in the sand and I really wanted to get up there this weekend and battle with those guys – you know, latch onto them," Reed says. "I really struggled to get good ♣

AMA NATS WRAP



JS and RC have been going bar-to-bar all season – here's some more proof if you don't believe us!



rhythm at the beginning of the motos this weekend and Davi...I was lucky I was a little stronger than him to get him at the end there. But I just had to ride into my rhythm and then just go at it after that. It was kind of a tough weekend. I had good starts and I was there both motos but I didn't get going at the beginning."

Millsaps inherits third. "Bubba's the reason why I'm getting up here," says Davi. "It's not good to say but every time he goes down I get on the podium – at least the last two times. I'm going to take this third and try and do everything I can. I'm happy with the way I'm riding and I'm going to go home and work to get past what I'm struggling with right now – which is arm-pump and other things like that. I'm just going to go home and work on something and figure out what's wrong with me."

So Stewart sits out Budds Creek which has been renamed by some 'Bubba's Creek' and Carmichael lays the wood to the field there with

his only competition being Reed. "This year the competition has been tough and Chad stepped it up this weekend," claims Carmichael. "He always rides this track really good – even last year and the year before. I knew it was going to be tough and we just tried to put ourself in a great position. It turned out to be a great weekend and I think we're all looking forward to the weekend off."

At Red Bud, though, Stewart returns to action and promises to give him a run for his money. In moto one Stewart nearly gets the holeshot but Carmichael goes to the first turn on his inside and takes the lead. From there Stewart gives a valiant chase but can't hold onto Carmichael so Ricky wins comfortably, followed by Stewart and Chad Reed.

"I've just been trying to find some speed and right from the beginning of the race they hauled butt," says Chad. "I had a good pace at Budds Creek and this weekend I felt pretty decent, did what I had to do to get into third, then got a



In his rookie 450F season Davi Millsaps holds fourth





Chad Reed finds himself in the unusual position of being in front of Carmichael



Another race, another holeshot for RC



I'll have a couple of Coronas please barman!

SERIES STANDINGS 450F class

1	Ricky Carmichael	242 points	(4 wins)
2	Chad Reed	212	
3	Kevin Windham	153	
4	Davi Millsaps	152	
5	Nick Wey	150	
6	Travis Preston	139	
7	David Vuillemin	129	
8	James Stewart	126	(1 win)
9	Josh Summey	90	
10	Timmy Ferry	86	

rock stuck in my rear-brake lever for three or four laps. Then I was just a lonely third. They were hauling butt. I had no chance of catching them after that."

Again in moto two Stewart nearly has the holeshot only for Carmichael to dive inside and take it away. "If he wasn't on the inside of me I would've gotten the holeshot," Stewart says. "It was good because we came out the same and I looked over and he had the line all the way. Instead of trying to banzai it and get 500 bucks [the holeshot award] I was just trying to chill out."

It pays off for Stewart as Carmichael crashes on lap two handing Stewart the lead. "I made a mistake," says RC. "I had some killer lines and I found some sweet lines on the parade lap and I was just leaning over too much and my front wheel went over the berm

and I fell and he went around me."

However, it only takes Carmichael two laps to catch and pass Stewart back and from there he seems to pull away easily. "I just made a few mistakes that lap and I was a little bummed on myself," says Bubba. "No big deal. We all make mistakes and I'll just go back home and try to make them better."

"I've been doing a lot of rehab and I'm just trying to get the motion back in my knee. After Southwick I was pretty sore. It was good to be able to take a couple weeks off and I needed it. During this break I'll be able to ride and train and get back up to my normal self. We're going to test a little bit and get my bike better. I think I'm like the only person who likes Unadilla next week!"

It's Carmichael's fourth win in a row and he extends his points lead to 30 points over Reed.

"I've been at this for 10 years now and I've had a great career. I'm happy with what I've accomplished and I want to race the races I want to race [next year]," Carmichael says of his plans to race Red Bud in 2007. "I have the option to race full time if I want but I don't know if I'm going to do that."

Reed finishes third in the moto after passing Kevin Windham at the midway point. "He's really good at turning on the inside and it took me the whole race of working at it to get it," Reed says.

"Finally I did and then I just had to stay with him that lap and make a pass. It was fun battling with Kevin. The first race I was just alone the whole race in third so it made the race go by fast. He's been a little off the pace this year and it's good to see him back up there."



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Ryan Villopoto is racking up the wins



Ben Townley's finally fit enough to race



Mike Alessi has a slender lead in the 250F table



Brett Metcalfe is tied for fifth with fellow Aussie Andrew McFarlane

SERIES STANDINGS 250F class

1	Mike Alessi	198 points	(1 win)
2	Ryan Villopoto	193	(3 wins)
3	Josh Grant	169	
4	Andrew Short	166	(1 win)
5=	Brett Metcalfe	161	
	Andrew McFarlane	161	
7	Nathan Ramsey	90	
8	Matt Goerke	84	
9	Troy Adams	74	
10	Jason Lawrence	72	

IS RV THE NEW RC? He's behind Alessi in the points but Ryan Villopoto's racking up the wins

Ryan Villopoto is becoming more and more reminiscent of Ricky Carmichael as he's won three of the five MX Nationals run so far this year – only losing round one to Mike Alessi and round three at Southwick to Andrew Short.

But at Southwick Villopoto's bike breaks giving him a huge gap to make up on Alessi if he wants to be in the championship chase.

At Budds Creek – the site of Villopoto's second victory of the year – Alessi crashes in the first turn and eventually finishes 16th in the opening moto while Villopoto wins with a 1-1.

Heading into Red Bud Alessi only holds seven points over Villopoto and Villopoto has all the momentum. In moto one Villopoto gets his first holeshot of the year. Many wonder what he can do if he actually starts out front.

And he answers that question as he jets out to a five-second lead on the first lap. No-one would get any closer as he cruises to his third consecutive moto win just in front of Andrew McFarlane who starts and finishes second and Mike Alessi who runs third all moto.

"I haven't pulled a holeshot all year and every time you line up on the gate you try and get a holeshot and it hasn't been working for me," says Villopoto. "It worked out for me that first moto. I had a clear track and I could just ride my pace from the first lap on and I haven't been able to do that. I felt awesome the first couple laps and I was just riding my own pace."

Moto two sees Matt Walker grab the holeshot, although it doesn't last long as both Josh Grant and Mike Alessi go by – Grant into the lead and Alessi into second. Villopoto starts outside the top five and works his way through the pack.

On lap three Grant stalls, handing the lead to Alessi who immediately begins to pull away from McFarlane who's holding off Villopoto. Shortly after Villopoto makes a move on McFarlane but can't seem to reel in Alessi the way he did at Budds Creek and Mike takes the moto win

and claims second overall for his efforts.

"We're going into the sixth round next week and I just have to keep getting points," Alessi says. "It seems like the first moto I rode uninspired and wasn't pushing. I never got tired at all – I just didn't feel like riding. The second moto I figured I had to pin it and get some points back."

McFarlane grabs fourth in the moto behind former world champ Ben Townley who debuts at the event and that's good enough for third overall. "I felt good this weekend," says McFarlane. "Lap times for me aren't a big deal as long as I feel good on the track. That's what's important. I felt comfortable on the track and then showed that I had the speed and the fitness and got two good starts so I was happy."

Villopoto's second moto second place is good enough for the overall – his third of the series. It doesn't seem to matter that he's never ridden any of the tracks he's winning on. "I've never been to Hangtown – I've never been to any of them. The only ones I've been to are Washougal and the three I did last year – Binghamton, Steel City and Glen Helen. That's it."



KTM PULLED out the cheque book in the winter to try and beat Stefan Everts but the French Connection blew itself out within three races and left the Orange Army with just one 20-year-old to defend their MX1 glory. And he's risen to the occasion!

Jonathan Barragan made serious inroads last summer with regular top four finishes and the #7 plate in his MX1 rookie year and he's handling the pressure like a man – KTM's last man standing in fact – this term with his first podium in Portugal and a place in the runaway series top six. And that after he'd sat out the warm-up races with a broken scaphoid!

"I broke it practising back home in Spain in January. Five weeks later I sat on a bike for the first time again on the Monday at Pernes for



LAST MAN STANDING!

He started the year charged with developing the '07 KTM but quickly became the Austrian factory's Nol rider – and Jonathan Barragan has been worthy of his battlefield commission

Words and photos by Alex Hodgkinson



© Surfly

the photo shoot with the team but I was far from ready and could only do a few slow turns for the camera."

With just one Spanish championship race under his belt Jonathan did well to finish 6-9 at the Zolder GP opener but he was not content. "The team was satisfied but I am a factory rider now and I wanted more." And that's the attitude that has endeared Jonathan to team manager Georges Jobe as the focus at Mattighofen switched from French fancy to Spanish stealth.

"I was third in the first heat in Spain until Stefan passed me near the end. Maybe you get a little more nervous when it is Stefan behind you but that was a good result for me. I don't like the track at Bellpuig – it's not a technical track like Talavera – and I have never made a good result there before."

A week later came the first podium in Portugal. "I had been fifth in the first race and then I suddenly found myself second in race two. I was five seconds down when I got to second so Stefan was just a little bit too far in

front and I couldn't see his lines. But I kept the gap at that for most of the race, I had the same speed. When I got the board that I could get my first podium I was pushing very hard to keep it. Second only to Stefan is good for my first podium but I want more now and I hope that I can beat him before the season is over."

There have been no more trophies during the first half of the season but top three motos have followed in Germany and Japan, even if the frustration at Everts' dominance has manifested itself in the occasional crash. "I can't understand why we can't beat Stefan. Week-in, week-out he just feels so good with the bike. It's amazing. Some races I feel better than others. Japan was very difficult – it was so bumpy and I got tired at the end. I had been sick all week and couldn't train."

"I have a problem with asthma but I did not take my medication because I was afraid it might be considered doping. But now I have a letter to say that I must take certain medication for my asthma."

And, just to put those results even more into perspective, Jonathan has been wowing the world on an untried bike. "It was the end of August last year when I got the offer of the factory ride with KTM. I also had offers from Yamaha and Martin Honda but for me KTM was the most interesting offer as they gave me more freedom to organise my season and stay in Spain."

"At the height of the summer I want to be in Belgium because it is too hot back home but for the rest of the year I prefer to stay in Spain – there are not so many races in sand anymore so it is nicer to practice at home."

It was the end of January before Jonathan found out he was being entrusted with the development of the '07 bike. "No-one had told me. I was at Brussels airport and a friend showed me an interview with Tortelli in a French magazine. He told that he and Pichon were the factory riders and I was just the test rider. I couldn't believe it at first. I knew I was not the number one in the team but I had signed a



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With KTM mentor
Georges Jobe





contract to be a factory rider. I thought this was not possible because I had expected to get the same bike as them.

"In the end I got lucky but the bike was brand new and I was a little nervous. I have had good results but we also had some problems. We had a problem with the electrics at the first race in March and I couldn't start the bike but that is the only problem we have had.

"And Georges helps me a lot. He has so much experience and of course he is still riding fast so he can speak first hand from what he feels on the bike. We walk the tracks together and he gives me advice on lines and he is so strong at motivating people."

The first time the rest of the world heard Jonathan's name was at the European championship opener in 2001. "I was a private rider and I went to the races with my dad in a small van. I won the first round and was leading all season until the last two rounds but I had signed a contract with KTM Spain for bikes at the start of the year and part of the deal was that I had to ride all of the Spanish championship. The last two Euro rounds were

on the same weekend as the Spanish races and I couldn't go."

For 2002 Jonathan signed for Bruforce alongside Tyla Rattray, Tanel Leok and Patrick Caps. "It was a difficult time because I didn't speak any English when I joined the team. I was supposed to get the same bike as the others except for suspension but in the end nothing was the same and we had many problems. I had problems with the bike, I was living alone in Belgium, nothing was how I had hoped it would be."

So Jonathan and his dad approached the Spanish federation about a ride in their team. "Harry Everts had already been with the team for two years and I didn't fit in at first. I still didn't speak much English and I found it difficult to understand many things. Harry knows motocross inside out but if he can't see that you want to work then he is not interested in you.

"We have no problem now but in the beginning we found it difficult to work together. Once my English got better and we could speak together in the second year we got on great."

And that second year on the team saw Jonathan make the bold step to MX1 at the tender age of 19. "If I could have got a 250 four-stroke I would have stayed in MX2 but that was not possible as KTM only had four-strokes for the factory riders. So I decided to go MX1. It was impossible in the starts with the 125 – it was bad enough the year before when there were not so many four-strokes but in 2005 there were only a few KTM two-strokes. There was no chance.

"I didn't know if it was going to be the right decision but I had to take the chance and it worked out. I had to make it work. I had no choice.

"I had been in Belgium two weeks before Zolder to ride the international race at Genk but I hurt my knee – I thought I had broken the meniscus at first so I had to go back to Spain for treatment – and I only came back just before the GP.

"I really thought it would be difficult even to qualify so you can imagine how big a surprise it was for me to race in third place almost all of the second race. I didn't have any physical

problems, I just got nervous in the last few laps because Stefan was behind me. I think that is normal. I finished fourth but I was satisfied. I had proved to myself and everyone else that I could race top three and I didn't crash."

And, even with comparatively little training, Jonathan had learned to ride sand. "I learned a lot about riding in sand from Harry. He was able to tell me a lot and racing sand is all about technique. I still don't think I am a good sand rider but I think I am improving all the time."

The next few races on hard pack were more difficult. "We had a problem with the clutch and we didn't get it sorted until Teutschenthal. I kept telling the team I was having problems but they didn't believe me. It wasn't Harry, it was the mechanics and they acted as though I was just trying to use it as an excuse. Race after race I would have no clutch from halfway in the motos. At Teutschenthal they finally gave me a standard clutch from 2006 and then I had no more problems."

Jonathan then missed Japan even though he was running top 15. "The team were straight and told me at the start of the year that we would not go to the overseas races so when I signed I knew the conditions...but at the end of the year I finished seventh. Perhaps I would have been sixth if I had gone to Japan."

There are still a couple of months to try to beat Everts before he retires but Jonathan has to be looking ahead to 2007. "There are many young riders – Strijbos, Tanel, me, De Dycker, Sword. And for sure there are coming more riders from MX2 next year when Stefan stops.

"When you are good in MX2 you will be good in MX1. You just need time because it is a different bike and you cannot hang it out like with the smaller bike. You cannot ride crazy or it will throw you off.

"I will stay with KTM next year. They are happy with me and I am happy with the team so I want to stay for at least one more year."

And Jonathan already knows what's it like to be number one having displaced Javier Garcia Vico at the top of the charts in Spain. "The public enjoy our races together and we have had some nice duels but it has been for real, not for show and I won the last six motos!"



HARE BRAINED!

Hare scrambles are big business in the UK with the promise of major saddle time at a sensible price drawing converts from all off-road disciplines. Suttly – DBR's resident village idiot – took on a pair of WOR events and didn't quite go the distance...

Words by Suttly Photos by Lord Jonty of Wales

WHAT CAN last around three hours and leave you feeling tired and dirty but oh-so satisfied and slightly euphoric? Well aside from the obvious (and, no, it's not a six-mile hike) the answer has to be hare scrambles – the generation-X label for hare and hound enduros (which as a name for an off-road motorcycle event quite frankly never made any sense).

Hare scrambles are without doubt the fastest growing off-road sport in the UK right now* with a whole heap of event promoters running events of various length – two, three, six or even 12 hours long. The idea behind them is pretty simple – turn up, pay up, line up, start up, ride as fast as you can for as long as the event is, load up and go home with a grin across your chops. And it's that simplicity along with the great value for money aspect (you get a minimum of twice as much on-bike time than at a motocross event for roughly the same fee)

that attracts hundreds of riders to hare scrambles events each and every weekend.

One of the higher profile hare scrambles promoters in the UK is WOR's Steve Ireland – the main man behind events such as the Tough One, the Dark One and the Motul Great Britain Hare Scrambles series.

I've known about Steve and his events for a good few years now and actually vividly remember the moment a fellow off-road enthusiast filled me in on who he was and what he did. Even though the only off-road experience I'd endured up until that point was getting lost in an overgrown AMCA paddock while searching for the parc ferme I used to thoroughly enjoy watching the Brinks enduros that were held in the hills high above my house.

At one such event I was stood by one of the many Brinks bog sections watching a giant of a man aggressively plough through the

bottomless black bilge on a Husaberg. "That's Steve Ireland – he's a right sadist," offered a Wulfsport-jacketed Mancunian who sounded something like ex The Word presenter Terry Christian would if he smoked 40 Woodbines a day. "You should see the bog sections he has in his Wirral Off Road events." I pondered the information for a moment but drew my own conclusion about the big fella – surely if he chose to ride a Husaberg for hours on end at a weekend that would make him a masochist...

Anyhoo, aside from the season-opening Tough One the six-round Motul GBHS series is undoubtedly WOR's flagship group of events, running from April to September with pretty much every corner of the country visited at least once. The series regularly attracts up to 300 riders over a weekend with races for everyone from nippers on 65s to over 40s on big-bore four-poppers.



*Broken roll-offs!
Not good...*



*Sutty's chipolatas –
just add mustard!*

After missing a hellishly wet opening round near Ashbourne I decided to get in on the action at the hellishly wet second round at Nantmawr Quarry near Oswestry. As a hardened veteran of two Tough Ones at Nantmawr I figured something as innocent sounding as a hare scramble had to be a proverbial walk in the park – I was wrong!

My travelling partners for this event were my old mate Eddie Holmes and his boss Steve Malone – an ex AMCA motocrosser and more recently a Dakar DNfer. Eddie and I have been friends ever since we attended the same playschool and as two dirt-eating snot-goblins who liked nothing better than running around making motorbike noises while holding on tightly to invisible handlebars we got along well.

We've both grown up – and out – a fair bit since then and Eddie's even gone so far as getting a snot-goblin of his own – my

god-daughter Harriet – to prove the point. But even now we're fully paid up members of the over-18s club we still like nothing better than flying around making noise – except now our handlebars are real Renthals and they've got Hondas attached beneath them.

With Eddie enjoying a little bit of everything he opted for a CRF250X when it was time to splash the cash on a new bike. And the X is a good all-round weapon which seems to be pretty much competitive in most situations. I on the other hand am keeping it real – MX stylee – with the CRF450 magazine machine. They're very different bikes for sure but that's the beauty of hare scrambles – you can ride pretty much whatever you like!

After arriving, signing on and scrutineering – WOR events are pre-entry only so there's no faffing about on the day filling out forms and whatnot – it's time to pick a place on the start.

There's no startgate at hare scrambles, instead it's a dead-engine flag start with riders setting off with their class competitors in rows. The pro class set off first followed by the experts and sportsmen – both classes are split into two groups by engine capacity – then the over 40s and so on.

If you're running a bike without a sidestand then it's worth trying to remember to bring a sturdyish length of wood to prop under your bars to hold your bike in place. Either that or do what I do – turn up on the line ready to go five minutes before the flag drops. Of course this means you get a ****y starting position but with three hours to make up lost time it's not exactly the end of the world.

It's also worth remembering to drop your fuel, some drinks, a selection of tools and some spare gloves and goggles in the work area. Some people have a full-on pit crew to tend



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Ins and outs of hare and hounds

So if you wanna crack at hare scrambles what do you need and what do you need to know?

Bikes

Either a two-stroke or four-stroke enduro bike is ideal but a motocross bike with softened suspension and an enduro silencer is almost equally as good.

Gear

Just your average run of the mill motocross kit is basically all you need with spare pairs of gloves and goggles to keep in the pits. It might be worth splashing out on a hydration-pack too as a dose of dehydration can ruin your day.

In the pits

You're basically gonna need a small tool kit, some basic spares and a full fuel can and funnel for your bike. There's not much point in lugging over your full toolbox or full selection of spares. It is a good idea to remember your bike stand, a dry-foam fire extinguisher and something to drink and snack on. Remember, your body needs fuelling just as much as your bike does.

Other bits and bats

It's worth taking a friend to help you out in the pits and possibly drive you home if you spank yourself too! Equally as important as taking a friend is remembering to bring some cash. There's nothing worse than having to blag an inner tube when you've pinched yours (and your spare) trying to fit a new tyre or something.

**The end is nigh - for
Sutty if not for the
rest of the riders!**

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**Ryan Voase grabs
the holeshot
at Nantmawr**



to their every need during the three-hour races but Eddie, Steve and I were all on our own so we'd have to sort ourselves out.

By the time all the pre-race rituals were sorted it was more or less start time. After a couple of minutes warm-up everyone's engine has to be killed and Steve gives the riders a final briefing. I can't remember exactly what it was he said but I'm pretty sure it was something about enjoying the race and anyone who cuts the course being excluded from the results or shot by a sniper or something.

I didn't have much time to sit and figure it out though as before I knew it the pro class were fired-up and away followed by the first wave of experts meaning my line was next. Looking back I suppose I should have practised my dead engine starts as when the flag dropped it took me almost a minute to fire up the hot Honda before setting off after my

long gone class mates.

Three minutes after setting off I realised I'd made another fundamental error. From previous experience I'd found that the going at Nantmawr was pretty rocky so I figured I'd be okay running a worn-out rear tyre at about 20psi to combat punctures but when I noticed the course swung left away from the quarry and into the boggy Welsh countryside I realised I was screwed!

The first lap was hell (being lapped by Knighter didn't help me feel any better about it) and the second wasn't much better (being lapped by Knighter again still wasn't doing much for my ego), in fact it wasn't until the third lap that I found anything to smile about.

Imagine this scene...there are bikes, bodies, steam, obscenities and mud flying everywhere and after struggling to man-handle my CRF upright on the Welsh equivalent of Hamburger Hill I was about to head back down and have

another crack at making it to the top.

That was until Eddie came flying out of a bush totally sideways with his legs waving wildly and the X's throttle pinned as he attempted to reach the summit. And he'd probably have made it too if I hadn't accidentally rolled into his path - oops!

With a girly scream and a fistful of front brake Eddie came to a halt narrowly avoiding any contact while I tried my hardest not to laugh up a lung. And as if the situation wasn't laughable enough Knighter blasted by the both of us to lap me yet again - the three-legged Manx *****!

With the race about half done I pitted for fuel, water and fresh gloves then potted off on my way. Unfortunately I didn't get too far as my bike cut out on me barely a quarter of my way around the lap. After kicking for what seemed like an eternity (and watching Knighter blow



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John Shirt Jnr is a
hare scrambles regular



See, we told you he's
the village idiot!



by lapping me again) the beast finally fired up and ran for approximately 30 seconds and that's how the rest of my race went.

I wasn't the only non-finisher though – Eddie went out with a cracked clutch cover and Steve decided to save himself for another day while Knighter went on to lap everyone on his way to the win. Being no-quitter I vowed right there and then I'd be back to finish off the job, make it to the finish no matter what – and this time I'd be better prepared. Kind of...

With the following round of the GBHS series scheduled a couple of weeks later I made sure an entry was sorted and a pair of new Michelins were bagged. I made sure I got to the bottom of my Nantmawr problem (see magazine machine on P40 for details) and after a mid-week ride at Rhayader I was all set to go the distance. All I had to do was turn up, fit the new tyres and ride my wheels off.

Sounds simple don't it?

Turning up was easy as the kick-ass new Maerhills venue was well signposted from the A53 between Stoke and Shrewsbury. Fitting the tyres was less easy and after pinching two extra-thick tubes I finally got the new rubber in place with a little help from Welsh enduro legends Ed Jones and Edmunds.

After chucking my spares, tools and fuel – for both bike and body – in the pit area I kitted up and headed to the start area just in time to catch the riders meeting which never sounds quite right with your helmet on. "Blah blah blah watch out for hidden tree stumps...blah blah don't go course cutting...blah blah warm your engines blah blah..." blah bladed MC Ireland before being drowned out by the noise of over 200 bikes firing into life.

This time I had a cunning plan for the dead-engine start. I barely warmed my bike up

as I reckoned it'd be easier to start with the choke on and for once my plan worked! When the flag dropped for my line to go the Honda fired first kick and I was away well inside the top 10 and I even managed to flick off the choke in turn one – result!

With the course being mostly forestry-based things were a little hectic on the single track course on lap one as riders went nose to tail as they tried to get by the guy in front. I was feeling quite upbeat about things and I was definitely moving forwards when the first of a few small setbacks hit me.

Setback #1 was the moment my roll off string pulled away in my hand. Setback #2 was the moment I hit a hidden tree stump – sorry blah blah...hidden tree stump...blah – with my right foot. Although my foot hurt like hell I figured the endorphins would kick in and it'd be fine in no time. My final first lap setback –

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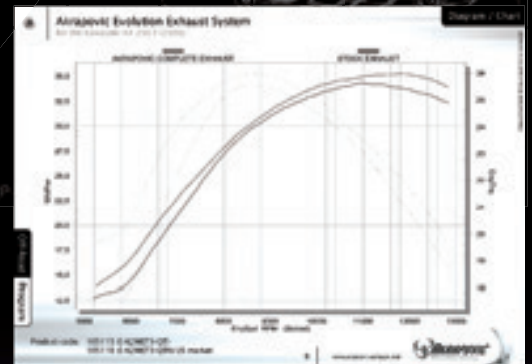


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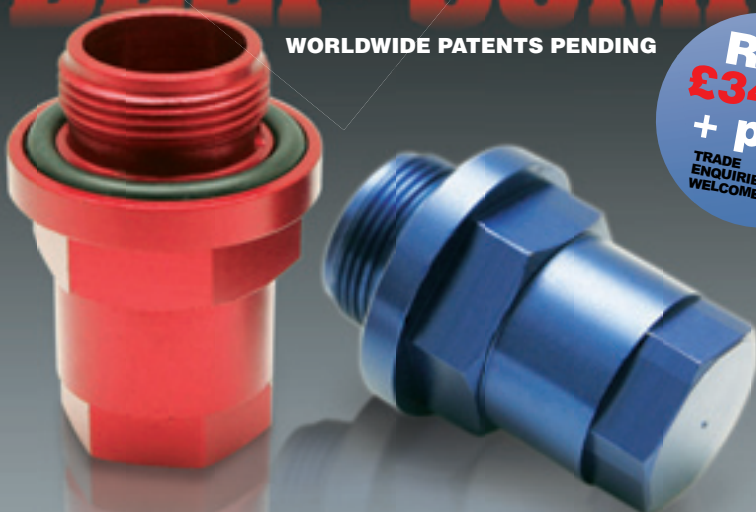
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Cheers, dudes...

There are a few people who I'd like to thank for helping make this feature happen. First of all a big thanks to Wirral Off Road's Steve Ireland who – with the help of his awesome team – ran both the top-notch hare scrambles I attended (and didn't finish/quit – SL). I'd also like to thank Jonty Edmunds for getting me into this fine mess and for liaising with the good guys at Michelin. Eddie and Steve from Proseal deserve a big DBR pat on the back for putting up with my moaning at Nantmawr and also Chimp who helped me back to my van at Maerhills. Finally, a big cheers to the team at Lancaster's A+E department for diagnosing and fixing my broken toes and also giving me p-p-plenty of heavy-duty pain killers. For more WOR details go to www.worvents.com.

Sutty was the inspiration for Peter Crouch's goal celebrations



that's setback #3 for those of you who are keeping count – came when I was headed up a steep hill and a Gas Gas rider rolled backwards into me sending us both, as well as another rider who mounted me from behind, floorward bound. The moment was so intense I got a 'Nam-style flashback to Hamburger Hill but this time it didn't seem nearly so funny.

In fact it seemed even less funny as I spent the next 30 seconds or so trying to restart the hot Honda with my poorly foot only to stall it again as I tried to set off through some dense bushes. So just 15 minutes into my second hare scrambles experience and I was already playing catch up with broken goggles and a boot full of broken toes.

The next two-and-a-half hours of the race are something of a blur, albeit a mostly enjoyable blur – a mixture of both pain and pleasure. The pain coming from my foot and the pleasure coming from riding some of the finest off-road going in the UK while hurling verbal abuse at DBR's regal photographer Jonty.

With just 20 minutes left on the clock I notched up my fifth lap which meant I could pretty much cruise around for one final time to put a very respectable six on my scoreboard. But it wasn't to be...

I'm not sure if it was dehydration that finally finished me, the increasing amounts of pain from my foot injury or just a general lack of fitness but a third of the way into my final lap I

was totally shot and after two stupid slow-speed crashes I had to call it quits. Luckily help was on hand in the form of super travelling marshal Alex 'Chimp' Nicholls.

Even after sitting down for five minutes to cool off I knew there was no way I was gonna finish the lap so I had no option but to follow Alex back to the pits the easy way – what a failure! So after two attempts I still haven't finished a GBHS but I've had a forest-full of fun!

Like I said before I'm no quitter (that statement contradicts actual events – SL) and you can mark my words I'm gonna finish one of these things even if it kills me (although I'd probably DNF if I were dead – hmmm!) It's gonna happen and it's gonna happen soon!

The 21-year-old is enjoying a steady – if unspectacular – climb up the world rankings



SLOW BURN!

He was hardly a teen sensation but 21-year-old Rui Goncalves still has time on his side as he works his way up the GP leaderboard

Words and photos by Alex Hodgkinson

RUI GONCALVES turned 21 while the GP circus was in Japan but the Portuguese stylist had already announced his GP coming of age by leading motos for a substantial time at both Zolder and Agueda. And, just to show he hadn't lost the taste for it, he again led in Italy – for eight laps – with world champ Tony Cairoli snapping at his heels.

"Some riders like Townley, Cairoli and Searle have burst onto the world scene but my progress has been gradual. Nothing sensational but my results have always improved from year to year so I hope it will continue like this until I cannot go up any more. I actually prefer to move gradually and riders like Coppins have proved that you can do it that way too.

"My progress has always been steady so I'm not going to get tight about winning yet. If I continue to progress I believe I can get there one day – some guys get a podium quickly then you don't even see them for two or three races but I'm not like that."

Back in 24th in his debut year of 2002 with Casola, 18th the year after, 16th in 2004 on his transfer to Van Beers and 10th last summer, Rui is poised to continue his steady rise up the world rankings by season's end after switching to Silver Action KTM during the winter after four years on Yamaha.

"Van Beers wanted two MX2 riders and I could have stayed even after they signed Aigar Leok but then I had some offers and in the end I decided I needed a change in the brand of bike to give me extra motivation. The four years with Yamaha were good but a little change can sometimes make a big difference.

"KTM have a really good base. Their production bike is already very fast and you can improve it. The Yamaha can be really fast if you get the Rinaldi stuff but I think if you compare the production bikes the KTM is better. We don't get anything special from KTM but the team is really concentrated.

"This is their first year with four-strokes and I was able to call on my three years on

four-strokes to help them set up the bike.

I had to do it all because my team-mate Manuel Monni was injured. But they are a very professional team. You saw this when Manuel got a podium in Germany on the two-stroke last year and that was not easy. I have made holeshots at Zolder, in Portugal and led in Italy so I think we did a good job.

"People think of Italians as laidback and easy going and they are but they also work hard, very hard. They will work until midnight to get things right and everyone in a team wants to be ready for the weekend. There is no rush during the week. If it's time for a coffee, time to sit back and consider what to do next, then they do it but at the end of the day they are ready for racing."

It is a work ethic which Rui has witnessed first hand from an early age, his family background being in the catering world with its long unsocial hours.

"My parents both work at a catering school, my father teaching how to serve in a restaurant and my mum how to cook. The family live in the far north, 30km from the Spanish border at a place called Vidago. Nobody in my family had ever been involved in motocross, not even any of my friends. But my dad bought me a little bike as a present when I was four. There was no thought of motocross, it was just like a different option to a bicycle.

"Some older boys were already practising for races and I just ended up following them. There are not many people racing motocross in the whole of Portugal so when you start racing you soon get to know everybody. There are only a few hundred in all classes and there are only a few who are fast. For sure everywhere there are kids with talent but there are not enough people to show them how to work at it back home.

"My first 65cc bike was a second-hand bike we bought from Joaquim Rodrigues' dad. I had some help in the first few years from a shop close to home but as I started getting faster in the 125s I started to train with Joaquim's dad.

Goncalves finished eighth overall at Matterley Basin thanks to a race two fifth



© Surty

"A lot of guys in Portugal have gone outside the country for one or two races but then they didn't persevere. After Joaquim started to make his mark abroad I worked hard to try to do the same and I was determined to succeed."

And the chance came with Casola.

"They had prepared for the season in Portugal and they were on the lookout for a young rider to join the team. The first test I did with them was with a 250 two-stroke on a supercross track but they saw that I had a good style and talent and we made a contract straight away.

"It was difficult at first because I was just 16 and had to leave everything in Portugal – I finished with school and left for another life without my parents and family. Living alone and racing at GP level at 16 is difficult, I can tell you. I qualified and scored points at my very first GP and in the winter I was German SX champ in the 125s but I had put my hip out at an international race in France early in the summer and missed most of the year."

After two years with Casola Rui moved to Van Beers. "I was end of contract at Casola. I could have stayed on but Van Beers was a new team, they made me an interesting offer and the two years with them was good for me. I set up my private life with Liselotte, I was more

Riding for a laidback Italian team seems to suit the laidback Portuguese stylist



settled and could concentrate on doing my job, not only in the GPs but also in the Dutch championship where I got second to Townley.

"I was always just inside or just outside the top 10 last year but I was always having to come through from the back after the start. What I was missing was a result right up at the front.

"Just to get top 10 every week is difficult – there are some riders who can get a good start one week and finish top five but the next they are back at the start and only finish 15th. My starts were just so bad, I was always way back on the first lap and people don't notice so much that you are always there around 10th."

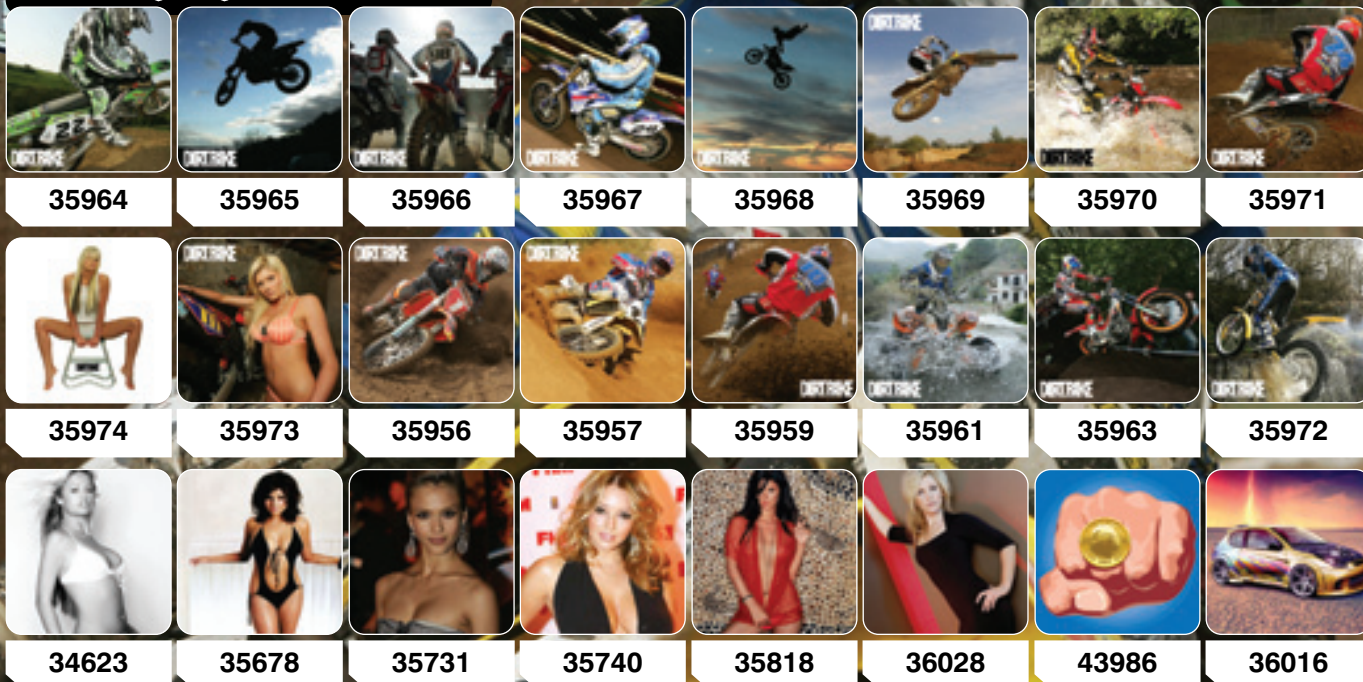
So 2006 has been a revelation.

"The first heat at Zolder and also the first heat in Portugal we had some problems with suspension but we found the problem and have solved it now. The second heat at Zolder was my first ever GP holeshot and it could lead for four laps. That was really exciting but I didn't panic. I knew those factory guys were going to push me back sometime. It was a strange feeling to race in front – I didn't really know how to approach it but I knew after a few laps that there would be a big gap behind me and I didn't need to panic. Those guys who passed me have all had the experience of winning GP

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motos and it was awesome to be leading a GP moto.

"And that was good experience for Portugal where I led for about eight laps. Even there I didn't panic and I had the support from the home crowd but Pourcel and Rattray were just too fast. Once they were past though I was running easy in third, not making mistakes and keeping my rhythm. That podium should have been mine but then the electrics played up. The ignition itself didn't break but a wire broke.

"At Bellpuig I had crashed in the second corner and I was almost a lap down but the second race I was sixth off the start and could move forward to fourth. Now I have the confidence to run near the front and that is what I am working for. I am realistic enough to know how tough it will be to actually win a race but I am sure I can run for the podium and by the end of the year who knows?

"Just take Italy. I was really frustrated in the first race — I was having selection problems between second and third and that cost me places but race two I led for eight laps. Cairoli was right on me the whole time and I could handle the pressure. I was disappointed to get pushed back to sixth at the finish but everyone was there.

"And I can come through the pack too. In Germany I broke the bike in the qualifying race and had to ride the Last Chance. But that means 25th choice of gate and you have no chance from there at that track. It's not an easy track to pass but I had plenty of experience of coming through the pack from last year. But it's still much easier when you start well.

"The first thing you have to learn when you do get out in front is to keep good speed from the word go because there are plenty of other guys just waiting for you to go backwards. I think I have matured that I can adapt to every situation."


After two years on each of his previous teams will Rui repeat with Silver Action?

"I think it is everyone's dream to get in a factory team, not to have to worry about anything and have the best material but I have a really good team at Silver Action. For a private team the structure is good, the bike is good but the dream for sure is to go factory."



Rui led the second race in Italy for eight laps





Josh is back and the killer Kiwi means business with a 1-1 card at Desertmartin as Billy Mac crashes out of MX2 handing Nunny the series lead

Words and photos by Suttý

COP THAT!

YOU'RE ALWAYS assured of a warm welcome when you head to Desertmartin as the Cookstown club do all they can to make your trip across the Irish Sea well worthwhile. And this year it's not just the welcome that's warm – the sun even shows itself sporadically for the first time since the ACU championship's inaugural visit to Porter's Pit in Y2K.

CAS Honda's Josh Coppins is back on the British championship scene at Desertmartin after missing the last three rounds because of a pesky shoulder injury. And JC's not just back to make up the numbers while riding himself back into shape – he's back looking as strong and as dominant as ever. If Josh can keep on putting in 1-1 scorecards, fourth in the championship could well still be his.

In theory you'd say that the sandy going at



JOSH COPPINS # 1 **MX1 DESERTMARTIN 1-1**

"The first race I took an awesome holeshot – got my head down and just went for it to try and pull as much of a lead as I could. I stalled it halfway around the first lap and lost like three seconds there but I still had a couple of seconds lead. Ken pushed quite hard but there was no way he was gonna beat me.

"Second race didn't start so well and I wheeled a bit out of the gate – I'm getting a bit tired for the second race and I'm not so focussed on the gate. Ken was out front but I caught him up quite easily. I thought he was gonna let me past then try and follow my lines and get me back so my plan was to stay behind him as long as possible and just follow him. But he kept getting slower so I went past and he couldn't follow."

the Porter's Pit circuit should suit Josh's team-mate – and series leader – Ken De Dycker and that looks to be the case in moto one where Ken battles through the pack for second after a crappy start.

But in race two the lanky Belgian star looks either A) too knackered or B) too disinterested to put up much of a fight. That's probably a little unfair on Ken who with a 41-point lead in the series and the surplus speed required to beat everyone bar Josh could C) be simply concentrating on taking the championship win and the fat Honda bonus that comes with it.

James Noble and Mark Jones trade 5-3 finishes to end the day level on points with Noble taking third overall thanks to a better finish in the second moto and consolidates his safe second in the series.

In MX2 not one of the three main championship contenders has the luxury of a mahoosive points lead as there's just 11 points in it with Billy Mac leading the way from Tommy Gun and Carl Nunn.

And there's no stopping Nunn in moto one as the reigning champ outguns early race leader MacKenzie with a little help from some very smart line selection and some not-so-smart back-markers who manage to get in the way of their battle as early as lap five!

While class veterans Billy and Carl scythe through the back-markers it's teen-terrors Shaun Simpson and Tommy Searle who are scrapping it out for the final podium place. Searle's come from way back as the 17-year-old gets a duff drive off the concrete launch pad but Tommy's youthful energy and

extravagant, yet purposeful, riding style soon gets him in front of Simpson who had been running third from the off.

Moto two's a different story. Nunn yanks the holey and leads until Billy comes flying by like a man possessed but he doesn't stay up front – or upright – for long. As the pair disappear into the back section Billy makes a minor mistake but goes down hard enough to leave his bike bent and his brain battered!

With Billy out of it Nunn inherits both the lead in the race and in the championship with Searle slipping into second. Simpson looks set to earn his first ever Maxxis podium in third but comes a cropper on the very last lap, dislocating his shoulder and handing the Cookstown club's silverware on a plate to Dutch wild-card George Strik.

BILLY MACKENZIE
MX2 DESERTMARTIN 2-DNF

"I felt really fast all weekend and only struggled a little bit in that first moto simply because Carl and I could not keep up the pace that had taken us away from the others – we were going very fast and there were lots of slower lapped riders coming between us.

"In moto two I was attacking the sand and riding the bumps like they were whoops but I got caught while going flat-out in the chicane as the suspension bottomed and threw me off. The bars and sub-frame were all bent and I didn't really know where I was for a while there.

"I don't feel too disappointed because I knew my speed was good enough and I only wish now that I had gone a little wider into the chicane. That first DNF of the season is a blow and all I can do now is try to win every race for a chance of the title."



JAMES NOBLE
MX1 DESERTMARTIN 5-3

"I sort of struggled with the set-up of my bike and I didn't feel too good in myself. It's so fast around here – I've never known it so fast – the jumps seem to be flatter and with the track being drier it didn't get so rough. It was just flat-out and I don't really like it when

it's flat-out, balls-out, neck-on-the-line type stuff.

"In the first race I got a decent start then Julien Bill came up the inside of me and took me wide. I lost a load of positions there and I struggled to get going after that – I eventually came back to fifth.

"The second race I felt a lot better and rode a lot better and I nearly got Ken at the end when he started tiring but he just managed to keep me at bay."



GORDON CROCKARD
MX1 DESERTMARTIN 6-4

"I came into this with a bit of an injury from last week – bad bruising on my back and a bit of a cut. I found it hard to ride this week, I tried to go out on Thursday just to test the water but it wasn't happening – I had no strength at all.

"The races were hard for me. I took some painkillers and felt really drowsy and tired so riding a bike wasn't really what I wanted to do but no choice.

"First race I was sixth and I had one small problem after the forks got hit by a rock – which forced the stanchion tube in – so the forks weren't able to work properly. I've never seen that happen before in my life. My back had no strength at all and I had to ride my bike like I was breaking it in.

"The second race I felt drained and heavy and horrible before it even started. I don't know where I was when I started but I just kept going and going and came fourth in the end which is fine all things considered – it is what it is!"

JULIEN BILL
MX1 DESERTMARTIN 4-6

"I made a very good start in race one. At half distance I lost some ground but was still in a comfortable third position, then I made a small mistake by over-jumping a jump which lost me some ground and allowed Mark Jones to get by. I thought I might get him back and save my podium position but there wasn't enough time left in the race.

"In race two my start was not as good but I was lying in fourth position. I was struggling with fatigue after only half the race – I have felt like this for a few races now. I lost two places to Crockard and Noble in the closing stages of the race but I was too tired to put up any fight. I am going to visit my doctor at home in Switzerland this week and have a blood check – it's not normal that I feel so tired."



CARL NUNN
MX2 DESERTMARTIN 1-1

"The first race was good. I didn't get the best of starts, Billy was out front and we were having a good race but he started making some mistakes and I was able to pass him and pull a small gap. I tried to keep the gap the same even though back-markers were a bit of an issue but with three laps to go I pushed and broke him."

"I got the holeshot in the restart to moto two then Billy came by me and he was riding faster than I was comfortable with so I thought 'yeah go for it'. I came around a corner and he was there in a heap so from there it was about putting in consistent lap times."



MARK JONES
MX1 DESERTMARTIN 3-5

"The race went really well and things clicked real nice and a podium in moto one was something I've been looking for all year. I just need to stay more consistent."



TOMMY SEARLE
MX2 DESERTMARTIN 3-2

"The track at Desertmartin is always fun and I'd been looking forward to this race. They had a concrete start here this weekend and that was bad for me as I had

bad starts and spent the whole race trying to get back up to the leaders. The first race they were 10 seconds gone on lap one but I managed to get that gap down to about three and then got caught up with the lappers. Overall the weekend was good as I stayed consistent and the points are still very close!"



Results - round five

MX1

1 Josh Coppins	(CAS Honda)	30+30=60
2 Ken De Dycker	(CAS Honda)	27+27=54
3 James Noble	(RWJ Honda)	21+25=46
4 Mark Jones	(PAR Honda)	25+21=46
5 Gordon Crockard	(Wulfsport Honda)	19+23=42
6 Julien Bill	(Bike-It/Dixon Yamaha)	23+19=42
7 Neville Bradshaw	(Motovision Suzuki)	17+17=34
8 Bryan MacKenzie	(Twisted-7 Kawasaki)	13+15=28
9 Martin Barr	(Bike-It/Dixon Yamaha)	15+10=25
10 Mark Eastwood	(Wiseco Honda)	10+13=23

MX2

1 Carl Nunn	(EA KTM)	30+30=60
2 Tommy Searle	(Molson Kawasaki)	25+27=52
3 George Strik	(EA KTM)	17+25=42
4 Brad Anderson	(Pioneer Yamaha)	19+21=40
5 Ray Rowson	(Molson Kawasaki)	15+19=34
6 Jason Dougan	(EA KTM)	10+23=33
7 Wayne Smith	(PAR Honda)	11+17=28
8 Billy MacKenzie	(Bike-It/Dixon Yamaha)	27+0=27
9 Shaun Simpson	(Wulfsport Honda)	23+0=23
10 Tom Church	(Molson Kawasaki)	21+0=21

Series standings

MX1

1 De Dycker 285 points, 2 Noble 244, 3 Jones 204, 4 Crockard 179, 5 Sword 158, 6 Bradshaw 139, 7 Coppins 117, 8 Barr 115, 9 Bill 108, 10 Hucklebridge 105

MX2

1 Nunn 260 points, 2 Searle 255, 3 MacKenzie 238, 4 Anderson 200, 5 Smith 180, 6 Swanepoel 166, 7 Simpson 127, 8 Dougan 122, 9 Kohut 101, 10 Robert 99



Knighter revels in the super-tough conditions and maintains his 100 per cent E3 record for '06

Ivan Cervantes leads the E1 field



Euan McConnell has a weekend to forget



Dehydration costs Paul Edmondson dear in Italy





Alessandro Belometti loses the E1 win on day one in the extreme test

WEC

Series standings

E1 Artavaggio - Funivia 0.30
1 Ivan Cervantes 194 points, 2 Simone Albergoni 165, 3 Alessandro Belometti 138, 4 Maurizio Micheluz 129, 5 Bartosz Oblucki 127, 6 Petri Pohjamo 105, 7 Helder Rodrigues 97, 8 Nicolas Deparrais 75, 9 Freddy Blanc 74, 10 Mike Hartmann 70

E2 Mossimo - Area di sosta 0.15
1 Samuli Aro 178 points, 2 Stefan Merriman 167, 3 Mika Ahola 160, 4 Johnny Aubert 150, 5 Cristobal Guerrero 109, 6 Fabien Planet 108, 7 Xavier Galindo 104, 8 Paul Edmondson 74, 9 Valtteri Salonen 73, 10 Alessandro Botturi 72... 15 Euan McConnell 44

E3 VEDESETA 2.30
1 David Knight 200 points, 2 Bjorne Carlsson 152, 3 Sebastien Guillaume 149, 4 Marko Tarkkala 132, 5 Marcus Kehr 117, 6 Alessio Paoli 111, 7 Paolo Bernardi 101, 8 Vita Kuklik 96, 9 Alessandro Zanni 88, 10 Daniel Persson 84

TOUGH AND TOUGHER!

The '06 World Enduro Championship goes from difficult to physically exhausting as the series reaches its halfway point in Italy

Words and photos by Jonty Edmunds

ROUND THREE in Spain was tough but nothing in comparison to the fourth round of the series – the 40th running of the GP Valli Bergamasche held in the rugged mountains of northern Italy.

It's a two-day event run over dusty, rock littered terrain and in baking heat which saps the energy out of the WEC's fittest riders. Come the end of the second day's competition many of the world's best enduro riders voice their very real concerns about the series becoming too hard.

"I thought Spain was difficult but this was much harder," comments Enduro 1 class winner Ivan Cervantes. "The days were too long and with the heat it was too difficult."

Despite reckoning that the event is too tough Ivan still manages to extend his Enduro 1 class championship advantage in Italy winning on both days. But Ivan comes close to being beaten by his team-mate Alessandro Belometti on day one.

After claiming his first WEC victory at the Italian round of the '05 series Bello knows this is his best opportunity to beat his team-mate. Setting the pace right from the start of day one Alessandro looks certain to claim the win but disaster strikes within sight of the finish.

Making a mistake on the rock covered extreme test Alessandro bends his rear sprocket and loses seven minutes straightening it. The former GP motocross racer is gutted.

"I knew that I could win, I felt good on my bike and I was ahead of Ivan and Simone Albergoni with just two tests to go. I don't know exactly how it happened but I hit my rear sprocket on a rock and bent it. I can't explain how disappointed I am but I guess it can happen in racing."

So Ivan eventually claims the day win by just under seven seconds but pushing him hard all the way to the end is Honda-mounted Italian Simone Albergoni who is fired up to win his home round of the WEC.

Despite being determined to win on home soil both Belometti and Albergoni are powerless to stop Cervantes on day two and Ivan claims his sixth day win of '06. Behind him Belometti makes it a KTM one-two while Albergoni hits the wall close to the end of the day and admits that he simply runs out of energy with four special tests to go.

"I knew that day two was going to be hard and it was. I just wanted to do enough to win but also make sure that I finished and didn't use too much energy. It was a very difficult weekend for me but a good one for my championship and the team. I just hope that the races in Canada and the US aren't as hard."

With Yamaha rider Johnny Aubert having been grabbing all the headlines in the Enduro 2 class after his impressive rides at the second and third rounds of the '06 WEC series, Finn Samuli Aro decides to do something about it in Italy and tops the E2 category on both days.

Unable to put his finger on why he didn't perform as well as he'd have liked in Portugal and Spain, he looks a completely different rider in Italy and beats both Aubert and Merriman.

"I felt good here right from the start of day one, I really wanted to win and that's what I did. I made things harder for myself on day two when I crashed on one of the tests and couldn't start my bike but apart from that I'm happy with the way I've ridden."

Leading the E2 championship coming into the event, French rider Aubert crashes hard on the final test of day one and despite finishing in third fails to start day two due to broken ribs.

His Yamaha team-mate Merriman finishes as runner-up to Aro on both days claiming solid championship points in the process. With Aubert missing from action it's Honda-mounted Finn Mika Ahola who claims the final podium spot despite finishing a long ways behind both Aro and Merriman.

After a strong showing at rounds two and three Paul Edmondson's hopes of lifting himself up the E2 championship ladder come to little as he places in ninth on day one and then pulls out of day two. "I got really badly dehydrated on day one and from the end of the second lap I struggled really badly. It was the first time that I have ever worn a drinks system in an enduro and even that wasn't enough to stop me from cramping up."

Starting day two Eddy completes just a handful of tests before pulling out of the event. "I just wasn't in good enough shape to finish the second day. There was no point in just riding around to finish the event. It's disappointing but day one was too hard really – I don't know what the FIM were trying to achieve."

It's even more disappointing for Scot Euan McConnell. Hoping to impress his TM team at their home GP Euan fails to finish either day. On day one a loose spark plug cap puts him out of the event while dirt in the carb on day two means he hits the showers early again.

Winning by four minutes isn't something that happens very often in the WEC series but that's exactly what KTM factory rider David Knight does on both days and also extends his E3 championship advantage to 48 points thanks to a big mistake from his team-mate Marko Tarkkala.

Less than a minute from the start of the event's opening test Tarkkala fires himself from the top of a natural downhill drop off realising only too late that he's actually on a different part of the test to where he thought he was. Hitting the ground hard having landed on the flat Tarkkala amazingly manages to get to his feet and go on to finish the test.

Clearly battered, his bike bent and his chances of a top three result well and truly out of the window, the Finn later retires and a trip to hospital reveals a broken bone in his right wrist.

Even for Knight the weekend is tough. Not wanting to waste energy or take any risks he crashes on the opening days untimed run through the enduro test before settling down and dominating the class. "After my crash I started riding well," admits the reigning E3 champ. "I wasn't pushing 100 per cent – you couldn't because of the rocks and dust. It was tough going on both days, too hard really."

"Day two was pretty much the same as on day one – I started well, opened up a lead and then tried not to make any mistakes. It was bloody hard though."

With Knight admitting that even he was finding the event difficult the Enduro Junior class riders suffer even worse than most. Riding at the rear of the entry many of the U21-year-old riders struggle on both days having to ride the exact same course as the senior riders.

Sweden's Joakim Ljunggren on his Husaberg tops day one while TM-mounted Jake Stapleton wins day two. With championship leader Ljunggren placing way down the finishing order in 16th on day two Jake moves himself to just one point behind the Swede and the EJ championship lead.



Philippaerts looks out of control but he breaks the finishline beam ahead of Cairoli



Crockard has a blast in Sweden for fifth overall



gp wrap-up

Coppins' comeback continues with another podium finish

FRIENDLY FIRE!

Off the track Cairoli and Philippaerts are the best of buddies but when the gate drops the Italians wage war on each other...

Words and photos by Alex Hodgkinson

INCREDIBLE! YOU all savoured the flavour of the 'battle of the buddies' at Matterley but compared with Montevarchi and Uddevalla it was almost tame! No quarter is asked or given when Tony Cairoli and David Philippaerts meet on the track but the two Italians have long been and remain the best of friends.

Both would rather forget the first third of the season but they are now both on the case. "The Yanks are full of **** with the hype. MX GP is where it's at!" Not me, although I agree, that's

straight from Fox's Ash Kane so it must be right! And the MX2 races in Italy are quite simply the most exhilarating races anyone present has ever witnessed.

Pourcel, Rattray, Goncalves – they're all on the case too but when it goes down to the line it's Cairoli versus Philippaerts and David wins them both by a whisker. He's had a miserable first third after winning the opening moto at Zolder with just 120 points from five GPs but the Italian in the multi-culti orange squad is equal

top scorer in Bulgaria one week before.

Kees Van der Ven has already been on the podium four times this year with Rattray and De Reuver but who strides up to collect the team manager's shield at Montevarchi? Georges Jobe!

"David is riding for me now. We have changed the suspension, the gearbox and a few other things to meet his wishes. He was still riding tense at Sevlievu but today you see the real David!" ►



And after he completes his hat-trick in Sweden Georges is effervescent with pride. "He's floating on the bike. He is getting faster every week and we haven't seen the best of him yet!"

The first moto in Uddevalla is on a par with Montevarchi as Pourcel and Rattray go at it for half the race before David and Tony slam their way through. The action is so ferocious that the French series leader soon sits back in third and even admits to friends post-race that he is scared to mix it with the two Italians at close-quarters and his acceptance of third has nothing to do with consolidating his points lead.

Into the final laps the lead changes hands more than once and it's Cairoli – defending the inside line – who leads by a whisker exiting the second last turn where Philippaerts has been successfully railing the berm under the nose of an ecstatic Jobe all moto.

Their lines cross in the valley but it's still Tony in front as he turns tight in the final turn. The Yamaha stands up, Tony's right leg is on

the saddle as he keeps the throttle pinned and four-stroke power launches him past the chequered flag alone with his left fist punching the air.

Philippaerts is off the track and barely makes the jump at all but the announcer confirms the result 10 seconds later. David is the winner! The Italian jury man still doesn't understand five minutes later until I explain.

Eagle-eyed onlookers will have noticed for the last five years that although the man with the black and white flag is standing on the tabletop summit the beam which the transponders break is at the base of the launch pad – and THAT is the finish line!

What makes it even more complicated at Uddevalla is the fact that the face of the jump is actually in the turn and the timekeepers have erected the two sensor stands at 90° to the apex, not to the following straight. Just look at the photo – to the left of Philippaerts you can see the outer tripod, the inner one is just out of the picture extreme right.

"That finish was like two friends having a laugh but I had the last one," grins David.

"When we walked the track I told David not to worry about the jump in a tight finish – just to nail it and break the beam," bubbles Jobe. It's another strike for the roguish Wallonian!

Race two is almost tame by comparison with Philippaerts settling for second and the overall as Cairoli crashes again and Pourcel escapes early. "Olivier Robert – the French national coach – showed me some better lines during the interval."

But Philippaerts is now just 46 points off the French kid with Tony C two further back.

MX1 is the Stefan Everts roadshow and the man now has 15 straight moto wins. "He's killing the sport," reckons Suttly on the phone after Sweden. "No way, he was eight seconds down with six laps to go and passed Ramon like Steve thought the blue flags were for him less than half-a-lap from the end," I reply as Suttly meekly accepts that he has only seen the result.



**Searle power!
Tommy Gun is proving
to be the MX2 sensation
of the season**



**James Noble leads
Julien Bill on the way
to a top 10 finish
in Sweden**



**Stefan Everts leads the
MX1 pack - nothing new
there then! He's now
won 15 straight motos...**

The fall that makes Stefan work comes at the fourth turn. "I switched to the inside line and there was no grip. And the pace was so hot in the first few laps I couldn't make any ground and I thought I'd blown it. Even when I got to third I wasn't catching Steve or Kevin but then Kevin came back to me and I started to make tenths of a second on Steve. That gave me new strength to pull out all the stops."

Second is already maintaining his 100 per cent GP win record for the year so why does he need it? "I'm going for the 100 GP wins now and I can get there in Ireland but I never clinched any of my titles in Belgium. I need to be 150 in front at the end of the day in Namur - I want every point!"

The gap to Leok and Ramon is already 148 so the only danger left is Stribbos who's 114 down. Kevin dumps it at Sylvain's feet in turn one in Sweden to lose another 15 on the day - if he does that again in the next three Stefan is home and dry.

Josh Coppins is back and makes another

podium in Sweden but he's still not 100 per cent. "I couldn't hold the pace of the front men early in race one and I don't have the endurance to run with them to the end of the second moto yet. South Africa perhaps. I've only been back on a bike for a month."

Billy Mac is still hurting too much to show his true speed without the fans support to help him forget the pain but Tommy Gun and Swanny are on the case. They rip through the pack in Italy and again in Sweden with Tommy taking his second podium with a devastating last quarter. "I think the others burnt themselves out in the first race." Don't run yourself down - even the continental crowd are on their feet as Tommy makes those passes on Gundersen, De Reuver, Rattray and Guarneri!

And Swanny is not even jumping everything on quali day after compressing two vertebrae at Matterley but he chases Tommy home to miss the podium by a point after heading his team-mate in race one.

We even have a home hero in MX1. Gordy

has to persuade Roger Magee that he's worth a plane ticket to South Africa and seventh from out of the pack in race one should do it. After race two Roger is in the press room trying to get an internet booking. Gordon slices his way up the leaderboard and adds the finishing touch as he slams Coppins for fourth!

Not only the riders are starring this month. Everts wins in Italy with a blowing exhaust but His Worship from Vienna tells Andy Summers he can't noise test the Yam. The reply is not printable in a family magazine, suffice to say that aforementioned FIM big cheese does not actually have a soprano voice.

Stefan wins despite the power loss but Stribbos is close. When Andy is allowed to test the Suzuki, Sylvain Geboers can't resist commenting "perhaps they thought it was Kevin's bike making the noise!" The Suzuki boss then speaks for everyone. "We are not in favour of penalties and I do not begrudge Stefan the win but I do feel sorry for the riders who were penalised in Portugal." ▀

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Tony Cairoli
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Flat-out and flying!
Katherine Prumm wins
the Women's World Cup...



Nerys Williams
and Sophia Paull –
British lionesses!



...and manages to resist
the manly charms of
gorgeous Giz Edmunds

KIWI QUEEN!

Prumm lifts Women's World Cup

Lisa Church gets her first practice as winning team manageress in Sweden as Kiwi Katherine Prumm goes one better than last year to snatch the Women's World Cup title on her Molson Kawasaki.

And what a hero the SA-born 18-year-old is! "After Teutschenthal I went to America and won the first three motos of their women's series but

in the second moto at Hangtown I got wiped out. There was a big step-up double and only five of us were doing it. The rest had been told to stay right if they weren't jumping and, as I came to lap one, she went right and I jumped. But at the last minute she veered left and I broke my right hand. "My doctor only gave me a 20 per cent chance of being here but the plaster came off 12 days ago and I have nearly full movement and strength again. There are nine screws and two plates in there but they don't bother me."

The series is thrown wide open in race one as defending champion Steffi Laier from Germany wins after France's Livia Lancelot crashes out four turns from the end but Kathi is hauling them in at the close after a difficult start. "Elin Mann made a hard pass on me on the first lap and I took a long time to settle after that. Then a girl on a Suzuki crashed right in front of me and I hit neutral twice before settling down."

It's now winner takes all but Kathi soon gets to second and turns the screw on Livia who crashes again trying to stop Kathi going past so the Kiwi wins from Laier by 10 seconds.

Nerys Williams and Sophia Paull represent Britain and Williams, the 27-year-old Londoner, comes away with 10th in the championship after a searing ride to sixth in the second moto at Uddevalla.

With more race practice it could be possible more often. "This is only my fourth race all year and one of the others was Teutschenthal. There's just hardly any races in the south east anymore and when there is I don't always get an entry."

Sophia is a bit further back on her debut aboard a newly-acquired KX250F. "I'm racing the DEP Challenge at home but it's a waste of time racing a two-stroke in the World Cup."

And the 18-year-old still manages to put one over the boys. "This is the only place I've ever driven a kart but I set fastest time of the day on Friday and last year I beat Josh Coppins, Ben Townley, Tyla Rattray and Scott Columb."

"No, she didn't," reckons Scotty. "She set fastest time so we knocked her off the track!"
Gentlemen to the last these motocrossers!

RESULTS - ROUND 9

MX1

1	Stefan Everts	(Rinaldi Yamaha)	25+25=50
2	Steve Ramon	(Team Suzuki)	18+22=40
3	Josh Coppins	(CAS Honda)	20+16=36
4	Kevin Stribos	(Team Suzuki)	15+20=35
5	Gordon Crockard	(Wulfsport Honda)	14+18=32
6	Francisco Garcia Vico	(Martin Honda)	12+14=26
7	Ken De Dycker	(CAS Honda)	13+12=25
8	James Noble	(RWJ Honda)	11+13=24
9	Jonathan Barragan	(Red Bull KTM)	22+0=22
10	Kornel Nemeth	(Suzuki)	4+15=19
11	Julien Bill	(Bike-It/Dixon Yamaha)	8+11=19
20	Neville Bradshaw	(Motovision Suzuki)	0+6=6

MX2

1	David Philippaerts	(Champ KTM)	25+22=47
2	Christophe Pourcel	(GPKR Kawasaki)	20+25=45
3	Tommy Searle	(Molson Kawasaki)	14+20=34
4	Marc De Reuver	(Champ KTM)	18+16=34
5	Gareth Swanepoel	(Molson Kawasaki)	15+18=33
6	Antonio Cairoli	(De Carli Yamaha)	22+9=31
7	Carl Nunn	(Champ KTM)	10+14=24
8	Kenneth Gundersen	(Ricci Yamaha)	11+13=24
9	Alessio Chiodi	(Ricci Yamaha)	13+8=21
10	Tyla Rattray	(Champ KTM)	16+0=16
13	Billy MacKenzie	(Bike-It/Dixon Yamaha)	0+12=12
22	Tom Church	(Molson Kawasaki)	0+4=4
23	Jason Dougan	(Moggstar KTM)	4+0=4

SERIES STANDINGS

MX1

1 Everts 442 points, 2 Stribos 328, 3 Leok 294, 4 Ramon 294, 5 De Dycker 292, 6 Barragan 212, 7 Garcia Vico 165, 8 Leuret 159, 9 Melotte 157, 10 Priem 146, 11 Bill 145, 12 Noble 132... 17 Crockard 86...19 Coppins 72...23 Sword 40...32 Hucklebridge 15, 33 Jones 13, 34 Bradshaw 13

MX2

1 C Pourcel 350 points, 2 Philippaerts 304, 3 Cairoli 302, 4 De Reuver 284, 5 Rattray 261, 6 MacKenzie 213, 7 Nunn 205, 8 Searle 196, 9 Gundersen 194, 10 Swanepoel 181... 27 Dougan 18...30 Simpson 11, 31 Church 10...36 Anderson 5... 40 Rowson 3





TOP GUNS!

After rounds in Japan, France and Italy it's Adam Raga and Dougie Lampkin who lead the WTC pack

Words by g2f.co.uk Photos by Eric Kitchen

THE UNEXPECTED Spanish pairing of Beta's Toni Bou and Sherco's Albert Cabestany take a win each at the two-day Japanese Grand Prix and leave Honda without a victory from a round that's hosted in their own backyard.

Dougie Lampkin does his bit to restore some of Honda's pride by making it onto the podium on Sunday but his 5-3 showing is only marginally better than his team-mate Takahisa Fujinami who can only manage two fourth places to record his worst ever home GP result.

Despite not being able to register a win on either day, Gas Gas' championship leader Adam Raga further extends his lead at the head of the series with a brace of solid second places. This is Raga's best performance in the Land of the Rising Sun and the reigning champion is quite satisfied with the fruits of his long journey East.

"Two wins would have been better but, still, this is a good result for me as usually Japan is a bad round where I normally lose ground to my rivals. In terms of the championship it could not have been better as I have now opened a good gap over second place. My only concern about the series is that Lampkin is riding better than ever."

In unusually dry conditions it's Bou who steals the early advantage on Saturday morning when Raga suffers a nasty crash as his handlebars break without warning on section two. This is also the scene of a major injustice against Lampkin as the observer bizarrely changes his mind without reason to award Dougie a five after the British rider has completed the difficult hazard for just a dab. After much debate the official gives his reason as Lampkin having run out of time when this is so obviously not the case.

These events give Bou a four-mark lead over Cabestany and Lampkin at the end of lap one who in turn are one mark ahead of Fujinami at this point. Raga's spill has certainly unsettled him and he languishes back in fifth spot as the first punchcards are handed in. Raga's recovery is the performance of the afternoon as he reduces Bou's eventual winning margin to just a single dab.

Cabestany is the next strongest through the closing 15 sections to net third place ahead of Fujinami who overhauls Lampkin who clocks up four maximums on his way to the finish.

With only minor overnight changes to the course, Sunday brings a similar challenge to

the riders – although the level among the front runners on the first lap is far higher than the previous day. In a game of cat and mouse Lampkin, Raga and Cabestany fight for the lead with Dougie losing ground to his two main rivals as he fives the ornate waterfall in section nine before catapulting himself back to the head of the field with an outstanding clean in section 13.

Lampkin's glory is short-lived as he fails at the final hazard on his first visit to allow Cabestany and Raga to head the running again. No-one is able to match the Spanish duo on the second lap as Cabestany produces the ride of his life to keep Raga at bay and off the top tier of the podium for the second day running. Lampkin can do little to stop these two riders and adopts a more strategic approach to the latter part of the lap to ensure that he comes home ahead of Fujinami to take the last rostrum place.

The costs associated with the trip to the Far East mean that only a depleted British contingent are on hand to fly the Union Jack. Youth championship leader Alexz Wigg is a noticeable absentee having had to remain in the UK to sit school exams. With the Gas Gas



Dougie clocks up his 99th WTC win in France!

star out of the way, Sherco pairing Matteo Grattarola and Loris Gubian do the winning with Gubian now heading the standings.

In the Youth category Michael Brown posts a pair of disappointing third places that see his championship advantage reduced to just a single point as the Spanish duo of Daniel Gibert and Daniel Oliveras do the damage by taking one victory each.

Three weeks later Dougie Lampkin keeps his dream of an eighth outdoor world title alive by taking his first win of the year at the French Grand Prix.

In a tough trial Lampkin's victory is by no means clear-cut and he has to defeat Takahisa Fujinami on a most clean tie-break to eventually collect 20 valuable championship points to greatly reduce the gap on Adam Raga. Antonio Bou helps the British rider by keeping the series leader off the podium and down in fourth place as Albert Cabestany completes the top five.

Lampkin's run of four fives in the first sections confirms the severity of the course and leaves him at the back of the pack as Bou, Raga and Cabestany record cleans in the opening hazard. However it is Fujinami who is the early leader with an initial run of 3-5-3-5.

Dougie does his bit to remain in contention but still finds himself slightly off the pace at the end of the first lap, nine marks down on Raga who is now the front runner.

The second lap is all about Lampkin's incredible fight back – his loss of only seven marks in the first 11 sections compares to the 29 marks he lost over the same number of hazards on his first visit. This vintage display by Dougie puts him four in front of his Japanese team-mate with four sections to ride and leaves the Repsol duo clear of the rest of the field. Despite making hard work of the run home, Dougie soaks up the pressure of having to clean the final section of the day to snatch a dramatic win to put his title campaign



Fujinami's still in the championship hunt after winning in Italy



Cool and calculated riding keeps Adam Raga on top of the WTC standings



Cabestany's the man on day two in Japan

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Alexz Wigg sits fourth in the hotly contested Youth championship



SERIES STANDINGS

World

1 Adam Raga 132 points, 2 Dougie Lampkin 120, 3 Toni Bou 115, 4 Takahisa Fujinami 114, 5 Albert Cabestany 110, 6 Jeroni Fajardo 90, 7 Marc Freixa 66, 8 James Dabill 52, 9 Tadeusz Blazusiak 52, 10 Shaun Morris 30

Junior

1 Daniel Gilbert 140, 2 Daniel Oliveras 139, 3 Michael Brown 137, 4 Nicolas Gontard 95, 5 Francesco Iolitta 83

Youth

1 Loris Gubian 130, 2 Matteo Grattarola 112, 3 Alfredo Gomez 104, 4 Alexz Wigg 101, 5 Karim 81

firmly back on track.

James Dabill is also a happy man as he records an eighth place to make up for his disappointing showing at the European event the day previous held at the same venue just outside the small town of La Chatre. In the Junior class Britain's Michael Brown finishes third behind Daniel Oliveras and Daniel Gilbert and in doing so loses his lead in the series. Ross Danby is the best of the UK youth pack, his second spot reinforces the third place he took in Japan and gives him sixth in the championship standings in the 125 class.

Lampkin's win in France takes his tally to an amazing 99 world round wins but the Italian Grand Prix will not give him the magical 100 as Dougie endures a bleak day that sees him slump to a potentially title-wrecking sixth position. However, Raga fails to capitalise on his closest rival's bad form and does his own bit to keep the Montesa rider's hopes alive by bombing to an almost equally bad fifth place.

After a dominant display throughout the day Fujinami finds himself in a tie-break situation to take the victory for the second round running. Takahisa is actually the best on observation by five clear marks but time penalties incurred on the first lap leave him level with Cabestany. Having been defeated in a similar manner by Lampkin seven days earlier the Japanese rider gets the nod on this occasion having notched up one more clean than the factory Sherco runner. Bou also suffers heartbreak due to time faults and loses his place on the podium to a grateful Fajardo.

Temperatures in the mid-30s plus hot, dry and dusty sections are the story of a sadly lacking Italian Grand Prix. Italy normally hosts one of the best trials each season with sections set high on snow capped mountain tops. This year the venue is much lower – and so is the standard of the event. Scattered around the town of Darfo Boario Terme, the hazards lack both variety and imagination with only two sections on a massive pile of rocks dumped in a nearby field breaking the run of rocky climbs.

Dougie's day is over before it has even properly begun with three fives in the first five sections. Fujinami, Cabestany and Fajardo are the top riders through the first half-a-dozen hazards, all three having only lost a few loose dabs. Raga in contrast is on nine marks for the same run and is slowly losing touch with the leading trio. Lap one scores reveal Takahisa and Albert sharing first place with Fajardo and Bou also locked together as the next best pairing. Raga is a dismal fifth while Lampkin sits in a shocking seventh place behind Freixa on a score that is double his Repsol team-mate's.

As time becomes an even more pressing issue the second lap is conducted at great speed and with little change in the running order. Fujinami and Cabestany match each other mark for mark on the concluding tour to finish in that order. Two additional time penalties to add to the four from the first lap see Bou lose out to Fajardo by a single mark. Raga and Lampkin fair little better on their closing lap to unusually fill fifth and sixth places after a day they will both prefer to forget. Dabill places eighth to move up to the same position in the series which is good work at his first full attempt in the world class.

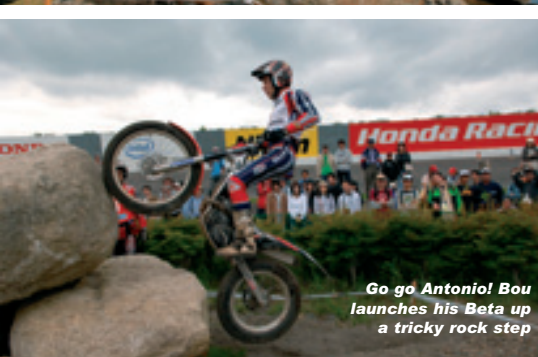
Brown takes second in the Juniors to sit third in the championship as only three points separate the top three places in this closely fought supporting series. Wigg comes home behind Italian rider Matteo Grattarola in the youth category to hold on to fourth in the overall standings despite his missing round. Diego Bosis adds some sparkle to the day by notching up his 200th world trial as he makes what is perhaps his last outing at this level.



Jeroni Fajardo ricochets through the rocks



Marc Freixa's back on a two-smoker after losing his factory Montesa ride



Go go Antonio! Bou launches his Beta up a tricky rock step

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WHAT ROCKS, WHAT SUCKS...

It's been an interesting month in our beloved sport – I have so much to talk about and stuff I don't want to talk about but, hey, that's racing! What certainly sucks was the event in Belgium for the World Mini Trophy. Not only did Scott Elderfield suffer an horrendous injury but the rumours that were circulating the pits were quite mind-blowing. I don't want to dwell on those type of issues but the feedback that I've had is that the track in Jamoigne is now closed due to the crazy antics of some of the European parents standing in lines and getting in the way of riders trying to race – enough said!

The BSMA event at Torrington which was held recently didn't quite cut the mustard in my opinion. One thing that stands out was the early '90s rave music in between the races. I know I'm old but rave music – what's all that about? The kids deserve better (maybe something like the mighty Status Quo or Abba would have been an improvement)!

Now for something positive, the new Culham whoops rock – more of the same please at other venues.

My Rider of the Month award goes to a little lad by the name of Max Anstie. Unfortunately, Max doesn't ride in the UK that often as he races all over Europe in the UEM European championship (where he is currently in seventh position) and across the pond in the USA. Max is definitely the fastest 85cc rider we have at the moment so well done Max.

It was nice to see so many of our top youth riders attend the GP at Matterley in Winchester. Rather than going off racing at a small club event they all gave their support to our British riders taking part and cheered on their favourites from around the world. Maybe in a few years their friends could be doing the same for them?

What sucks!
Rave music – almost enough to send the riders out on strike



What rocks!
Great starts



What rocks!
The BSMA's new lollipop man...



*What rocks!
The new whoops
at Culham*



*What sucks!
The long push
back to the pits*



RAY'S RIBTICKLER!

As you can see from this great specimen of Euro splendour this guy needs some sun real bad!



MY BEST RACE

My Best Race this month comes from the current Senior 250F class BSMA championship leader Jamie Webb. Take it away Webby...

"I have so many good races to choose from but I've narrowed it down to one of my big-wheeled races at Newlyn Down in Cornwall from a couple of years back.

"It was the third round of the BSMA championship and it was hammering it down with rain. I took the holeshot in the first race and kept focused and pulled a gap on the chasing pack which included Kristian Whatley, James Dodd and Joe Dark.

"I kept pushing until the end and crossed the line first absolutely soaking wet but the thing I remember most is that I couldn't stop smiling after the race as I beat all the top riders at that time. It's something I will never forget – it will always stick in my mind."

Nice one Jamie and good luck for the remainder of the season.



IT'S THE FINAL COUNTDOWN!

FOUR DOWN AND THREE TO GO FOR BYMX BOYS

We've now passed the halfway mark in the BYMX championship with the country's top youth riders still facing two trips to Ireland plus a yet-to-be-decided venue for the last round in September after Pontrilas was withdrawn for political reasons.

When we started way back at a cold and damp Matchams Park there wasn't one clear winner in any group and with four rounds now complete the championship tables are still wide open for anyone within the top five to grab their piece of glory.

This year has seen an influx of professional teams into the paddock with two outstanding set-ups standing head and shoulders above the rest – Pioneer Yamaha and PAR/KRM Honda. Is this good for our sport? Too right it is! But Kawasaki and Suzuki need to catch up or they may get left behind.

KTM have a small but very smart presence in Redline KTM and hats off to them for keeping things 21st Century.

We are still years behind the USA in on-site facilities and to be honest even the Euros kick our butts but it was nice to see a new circuit added to the list of venues this year at Oliver's Mount in Scarborough.

The track if worked on would be amazing and the current on-site facilities are some of the best we have on offer including permanent toilets, showers, fantastic pit area, easy access from the main roads and to top it all amazing views across the Yorkshire countryside so things may start to happen there in a big way.

Now for the racing! Matchams was fine but the feedback from the pits was that it's just too boring to ride – massive jumps aren't the be all and end all in youth motocross.

The weather caused havoc at round two at Brampton and the event was cancelled due to the conditions being too severe.

On to Culham – great track, great venue but so, so boring. Okay, I'll correct myself, they did add a very nice whoop section at the bottom end of the circuit but apart from that nothing has changed. With the space we have at Culham it should be our showpiece setting, let's hope it improves in 2007.

So who's going to take home the silverware this year?

Ben Howell, Jack Kelly and Adam Sterry are looking good for the championship but don't count out Jack Heath to pull a few surprises along with Ben Watson in the 65cc class.

The small-wheeled brigade have Jack Rowe leading the pack closely followed by a gaggle of super-quick riders in Turbo Taylor, Luke Hawkins, Jake Page, Daniel Hutchinson, Connor Walkley and Jamie McCanney. In fact I could rattle off 15 other riders who on their day could finish in the top three – the depth of talent in this class is quite amazing.

Daniel Arnold leads the championship in the big-wheeled 85s but again six or seven other riders could easily sneak wins on any given day. Mel Pocock, Scot James, Lewis Tombs, Lewis Abbott, James Hutchinson, Sam Davis and Matthew Moffat are there chomping at the bit for victory.

In the Intermediate 125cc class so far we've had five different race winners in 2006 – Lewis King, Luke Remmer, Aaron Smith, Luke Burton and David Games (who unfortunately will be out for the rest of the season with a broken leg). The other four will certainly take more race wins at the remaining three rounds and add to that the likes of Tom Watts, Josh Waterman, Jack Hawes, Sean Devlin, Will Worden and Bradley Smith and the season has plenty of fireworks left in it.

At the start of the season we had four main contenders in the Premier class with Alan Keet, Steven Clarke, Kristian Whitley and Ashley Greedy. That has now been reduced to three as Alan Keet seems to have disappeared off the youth racing scene and that's a real shame.

This group of riders could be racing for the championship at the very last round in the very last race – it's so close to call even I won't predict this one. Following on behind this pack is Alec Rockwell, Ashley Wilde, Chris Hay, James Lassu, Luke Meredith, Gary Gibson and Aston Johnson who are battling for fourth position.

So we have three rounds to go of mega racing and I would imagine a lot more stories to tell by the end of the season – I'll be at all the remaining rounds to make sure I can bring them all to you. Good luck to all, ride safe and support your sport.

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BRADLEY WARD



AGE: 10
BIKE: KAWASAKI 85
YEARS RACING: 4
KIT: ANSWER
NUMBER OF TROPHIES: 154
TITLES: 2
BROKEN BONES: 3
TRUCK/VAN: OLD SPRINTER

JANSEN DAY



AGE: 13
BIKE: MILESMX KTM 85
YEARS RACING: 6
KIT: ALPINESTARS
NUMBER OF TROPHIES: 65
TITLES: 4
BROKEN BONES: 1
TRUCK/VAN: RIMOR NG5



Revvs does vital work in the south Bristol community

REVVSSOS!

YOUNG TECHS NEED YOUR HELP...

Young Revvs Mechanics' call to readers – please find us some bikes! The Revvs Young Mechanics Club in south Bristol was set up in February this year to introduce youngsters to the amazing world of off-road riding and to discourage children from getting involved in crime or anti-social behaviour.

South Bristol has a big problem with illegal off-road motorbikes destroying the peace of the community so the Revvs Club aims to demonstrate that given the right guidance and encouragement, young people can be responsible with motorbikes.

Mechanics Steve Winstanley and Mike Summerhayes teach youngsters to build motorbikes from scratch and to diagnose and repair mechanical problems. From the off the club has been extremely popular. In the past few months alone nearly 40 children have passed through Revvs with more than 20 children getting seriously involved in mechanics – some as young as eight years old right up to 16 years old.

However, Revvs has been hit by misfortune in recent weeks. On June 17 their lock-up was broken into and their four precious motorbikes, painstakingly built by the children, were stolen.

They no longer have any working material to keep the club going and nothing to ride in the future. Their tools have gone and important parts from their remaining bike are missing, presumed dead.

This body blow has not been helped by the fact that their funding is running out and the club needs a turbo cash injection to keep going through the summer. Parents are now trying to organise a sponsored event to keep the club afloat while a Lottery bid can be put together.

The staff had plans to develop the club, to create a new teaching session on a Wednesday and make links with other young riding/mechanics clubs around the country. But none of this can happen without some help from Dirt Bike Rider readers, motocross clubs and businesses across the country. Revvs now urgently need second-hand or old motorbikes with smaller cc engines and bikes needing repairs that they can get working.

"The mechanics skills of these youngsters are incredible," says Steve. "Some of the Revvs members are not doing well at school but shine in these more hands-on activities. The skills they learn can prepare them for good employment – and most of them dream of owning their own mechanics business one day."

For more information, to visit Revvs or to donate motorbikes please call Steve on **0781 108 2465** or email Kathe at **kathe.ks@knowlewest.co.uk**

COMMENT

It seems to be that time of the year when reality TV goes crazy. We've not only got the crazies in Big Brother to contend with, there's also Celebrity Love Island hitting our screens very soon – I can't wait!

Now imagine if someone decided to follow a handful of schoolboy riders and their families around for six months. Just think of the footage they could get, a mind-blowing documentary of madness and fun I'd say.

Well there are rumours of a youth DVD being released at the Dirtbike Show later in the year – a little bird told me that it's going to be called the Next Generation and is actually in production right now. And it won't just be race footage, there will be some behind the scenes stuff showing what they get up to away from the track. All I can say is watch this space as it's going to be one fun and fascinating DVD!

At the World Mini Trophy this year Scott Elderfield suffered a serious internal injury which caused him to lose 40 per cent of his liver which will put Scott out of racing for a long time. I've known Scott and his family for nearly four years now and it hit me real bad when this dreadful bit of news filtered back to me.

I've travelled with the Elderfield's up and down the country and across Europe to watch and support Scott and I'm going to miss that – a lot. So from me personally Scott and the rest of the DBR team get well soon buddy as racing isn't the same without you.

Safe riding everyone...

Chummy



Got any youth news for Rage?

Give Ray Chuss a bell on **07773 609994** or email him at **dbryoutheditor@raychuss.com**

RACEDATES

We have some serious racing ahead in the next month. Here's a list of race dates for your diary.

BSMA Rnd 4:
BYMX Rnd 6:
BYMX Rnd 7:
Loretta Lynns:

Brookthorpe (July 15/16)
Ballykelly (July 21/22)
Desertmartin (July 28/29)
USA (August 1/5)



PAIN BARRIER!

BROKEN BONES AND BROKEN BIKES MAKE FOR A TOPSY-TURVY MONTH FOR BILLY



NOT THE best month for me – after breaking my hand at Landrake everything went tits-up! I tried not to think about the injury but it was obvious when I got to the races that it was hindering my riding.

So I'm gonna skip past talking rubbish and giving you excuses about Italy and Bulgaria, the short version of both is that I was just riding hurt. However, for the British GP I had sourced a doctor that could give me a local anaesthetic injection in my hand.

The days leading up to the GP were normal but when I arrived Friday afternoon I began to get really excited! The place looked awesome and the amount of campers and fans there already was really cool. It got me fired up and I wanted to give it everything.

So already on Friday there was an atmosphere. I could see it building with every car that pulled in – the campsite was gridlocked with campers, campfires, BBQs, tents, the lot. It looked so much fun – I actually wished I was a spectator for a moment it was so chilled and relaxed.

Saturday practice and pre-qualifying went well – I was in the top eight in every session which is really unusual as I'm normally trying to scrape top 15! Everything was looking really good for qualifying but as the gate dropped I found myself on the floor twice in the 20-minute race. Normally I am happy with top five in the heat races so to get 11th pissed me off!

I remember thinking when I was down 'if I don't qualify in this then I'm not even bothering with the Last Chance session' (I hate the Last Chance) and luckily I got in. But only just!

If you are inside the top five in your heat then you have a chance at a decent start but I was 22nd! The worst I've been all year. I was having the injection in my hand every four hours as it kept wearing off and the doctor was evil with it too! I hate needles, I go all queasy if I look at one, so I had to distract myself while he jabbed it right between the break to numb it and it was horrible when I felt it hit the bone...

The main thing was that it worked and I came out for the first race hauling! I didn't shut off for the first corner at all and kept her wide open round the long left-hander and quickly made my way from 15th to third in three corners! I settled into a pace midway as my arms got a little tight and that was enough to let Philippaerts pull a gap. I decided to settle for second and then try for the overall on the day but close to the end Pourcel started closing.

I thought I had it under control – well I did – but two laps in succession I couldn't make the uphill triple after missing a gear and then losing drive on the bumps which cost me a couple of seconds and before I knew it he was on me! I couldn't hold him off and as much as I tried and heard you cheering it was just a lap too late. I was gutted, really gutted!

It was the same thing again on the start of race two – I was up to fourth after being in 15th. On lap two I passed Tommy and was on the tail of Cairoli and Philippaerts, I felt comfortable and I was ready to start making a game plan for the lead. Next lap though I came into the berm after the whoops and it just straightened up on me and threw me off the track. I kept the bike pinned and looked for another entrance to get back but the further I went the more apparent it was that I had to do a complete U-turn.

I rejoined behind a freight train of riders after being passed by about five or six while I was dithering about off the track. After that it was hard to get back up to speed, I had lost my early race rhythm and was stuck with the slower riders.

I couldn't pick my lines because I was always blind going in to turns from the guy in front. The more mistakes I made the more time I lost and the tighter I rode. I had to let them go a little bit so I could suss my lines out and hopefully ride a pace to then overtake but it was an error because the track was a difficult one to make up time on as you probably saw.

It was fast and kind of one line so I was only making maybe half-a-second a lap and in the end I lost out on my home podium because I couldn't manage one pass! Congratulations to Tommy though, at least he saved his first one for the British



fans but I was so frustrated. I really wanted to be up there.

Next was Ireland for the British Championship and I was feeling really good, my hand was better and I only needed to take a painkiller. The first moto was another good race between me and Carl. Again we both set a real fast pace and it came down to tactics by the end. I left it a little late as I had a bit of arm pump and he beat me by a couple of seconds.

The second race was restarted after a lap. I was gutted because I had already pulled out an awesome lead after a good start (for once). On the restart and after two laps I was in the lead and pulling away. I was loving the track. My bike was working sweet and I was attacking the roughest parts of the track at full speed and just man-handling the bike through them. Unfortunately, it all came to a high-siding end!

I hit the chicane over the back, fifth gear pinned just like the lap before – but this time there was an evil bump waiting for me and he decided to bottom my suspension and flick the bike out of line. I came down real hard and bust the bike up. I laid on the track feeling sorry for myself as I knew I couldn't ride because of the damage. My teeth were all chipped, I had bit my tongue and hurt my shoulder and back – I just sat there knowing my lead was gone.

I got back from Sweden about two hours before starting this column. It was an up-and-down weekend. I felt like I was riding good, just a little bad luck with the engine and a small crash. But the good thing is I can start riding during the week and I need to improve my bike a little bit more so hopefully I can report back with a podium in South Africa!

Oh, I went to see Robbie Williams live in concert last night after leaving the race. We had a hotel in Gothenburg. Me and Julian Bill went out to get some food and we realized he was playing just down the road so we bought some tickets off a local yob and had a good time. Robbie's songs may suck but he is one hell of an entertainer! It was a good night and kind of cheered me up after having such a rubbish race.

BD 11

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